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... see pp. 12, 13

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55th year of publication

Short- and longterm relief work under way in Mozambique

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Alan Doerksen

MISSISSAUGA, Ont. – Flood waters have continued to rise in Mozambique, and much work still needs to be done to help Mozambicans recover from the devastation brought by recent floods. Relief and development agencies such as World Vision, the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee (CRWRC) and the Canadian Foodgrains Bank and Mennonite Central Committee are contributing to relief efforts with both short- and long-term programs.

WORLD VISION

Flooding in Xia-Xia, southern Mozambique, March 6.

Trapped by rainy season

Dave Toycen, President of World Vision Canada, traveled to Mozambique and Zimbabwe in mid-March to assess the damage. After his return, in late March, Toycen told *Christian Courier*, "The Limpopo River is rising again. The rainy season is still for a couple weeks... We're really trapped by the rainy season itself." While visiting neighboring Zimbabwe, Toycen saw river beds with water 20 or 30 feet higher than normal.

Several major rivers, such as the Limpopo and the Zambezi, drain through Mozambique, emptying into the Indian Ocean. Because of this, Mozambique acts as "kind of a funnel for rain," explains Toycen.

In World Vision's relief effort in Mozambique, "the primary issues for us are food distribution, clean water and health," explained Toycen.

World Vision has been working with partner agencies such as Oxfam and Mission Aviation Fellowship (MAF) in Mozambique. "At the beginning, we co-operated with Oxfam to get a helicopter," says Toycen. "MAF has been a real partner to us in terms of moving people around."

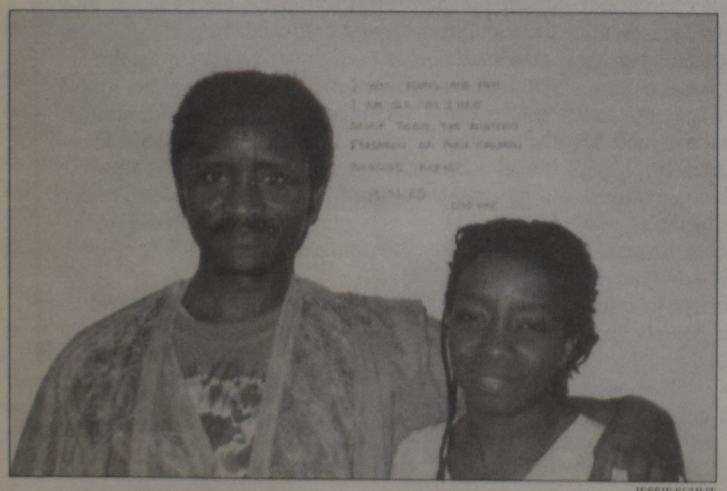
Ottawa is generous

The Canadian government has encouraged World Vision's work by committing to $11.6 million of support, Toycen notes. "I'm happy Ottawa is responding with a generous spirit. Mozambicans are suffering from the worst floods in recent memory, and all Canadians, both the federal government and private citizens, are stepping up their efforts to help." By late March, World Vision Canada had received more than $100,000 in private donations, the agency reported.

After visiting with some of the people of Mozambique, Toycen comments, "I was really

See **RELIEF** *page 2...*

Refugees from Sierra Leone testify to God's grace



JESSIE SCHUT

George and Yatta Foryoh in their Edmonton apartment.

Jessie Schut

EDMONTON — Almost every week, Christians are besieged with requests to support a variety of causes. Floods in Mozambique, twisters in Texas, orphans in Africa.... As donor fatigue sets in, we wonder what difference our few dollars will make.

A lot, says one newcomer to Canada. It can change a person's life.

George Foryoh, his wife Yatta, and their children Satta and Sia, have vivid memories of March 26, 1991. As rebel armies moved closer to their home town of Koindu in Sierra Leone, Yatta urged her husband to follow the other villagers and find safety in neighbouring Guinea Conakry, only 4 km away across the river Moa.

Life's dreams invested

Fleeing Koindu wasn't an easy decision to make. Just two years before, George, a lab technician, had opened a medical clinic to serve the community. He and Yatta, a nurse, had stocked it with medical supplies and equipment. Their life's dreams were invested in the operation.

But, sensing impending danger, they joined the rest of George's large family, packed just what they could carry and joined the stream of refugees, thinking they'd be able to come back in a few days when the armies had retreated.

That day never came. Sierra Leone, one of the world's most impoverished nations, is still in the throes of upheaval. Their beloved home town was burned to the ground and nothing is left of it. Today, the Foryohs live in an apartment in Edmonton's north end, immigrants sponsored by West End and Trinity Christian Reformed Churches. While Yatta upgrades her nurses' training at a Community College, George works part-time as a host at a giant supermarket.

See **REFUGEES** *page 2...*

News

Relief agencies work closely with Mozambican partners

... *continued from page 1*

encouraged with the religious affirmation. You might expect people to be angry or blame God." But instead, some people felt that God was protecting them.

I run to Jesus

Toycen tells of one evening in Mozambique when he heard a man singing. He was a blind man who had found his guitar and was singing, in Portuguese, "I go and I run to Jesus. Even if I have no food, I go and I run to Jesus."

World Vision began working in Mozambique in 1984, "when the country was still in civil war," explains Toycen. "We've gradually changed our role from relief to development. We're working with almost two million people with agricultural recovery."

As part of its relief effort, World Vision is distributing 40,000 survival kits, valued at $100 (Cdn.) each, which contain utensils, soap, one or two outfits, blankets and other necessities for families who have lost everything. Mozambican farmers are being given start-up kits for the new planting season, which will start soon. These kits contain farming tools and seeds.

World Vision has a staff of 700 relief workers in Mozambique to distribute food.

After the cameras leave

The Canadian Foodgrains Bank estimates that between 500,000 and one million Mozambicans have been affected by flooding. This agency provided an initial response of cereal grains, beans, oil and sugar, which was followed up by its provision of seeds and tools for farmers. All of its assistance is being co-ordinated through on-the-ground partners in 14 districts of Mozambique, reports the bank in a press release.

"Our members already have strong relationships with partners on the ground that live and work in the affected areas," explains Trish Jordan, the agency's director of resources. "This allows us to quickly determine immediate needs, but also to plan for the longer-term rehabilitation and support that will still be required long after the cameras have left Mozambique and its people."

"Our program will be carried out over the next six months with a larger shipment of Canadian commodities to be programmed as food-for-work," states Jordan. "This final stage will involve the people of Mozambique and the Foodgrains Bank partners and members working together to rebuild roads and rehabilitate farmland. It's about providing hope to the people of Mozambique as they work to pull their lives back together and feed their families once again."

Seeds and tools

CRWRC has been "quite involved" with the relief effort in Mozambique, reports Canadian Director Wayne DeJong. The agency has been working with the Presbyterian Church in Mozambique on both long-term and short-term projects. With the Foodgrains Bank, CRWRC has been distributing seeds and tools to Mozambicans. "Now, we're really rushing to [send] seeds and tools because planting season starts in a few weeks," asserted DeJong. This project involves the purchase of $350,000 worth of maize from southern Africa, which will be delivered to Mozambique.

Transportation of supplies in Mozambique is "getting easier," says DeJong. "We no longer have to rely on helicopters to transport everything."

CRWRC (in the U.S. and Canada) has set a target of $200,000 for its relief work in the troubled African country. The agency started its work in Mozambique about seven years ago.

Refugee centre with a view

The Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) and its longtime local partner, the Christian Council of Mozambique (CCM), have joined in a relief and rehabilitation effort that began shortly after the floods hit and will stretch into August and September of this year, reports Mark Beach of MCC, who was in Mozambique in mid-March. The Mozambican government is concerned that malaria and cholera will begin spreading if floodwaters do not recede soon.

Many Mozambicans now live in refugee centres, such as a former Portuguese restaurant in Camtembe. Although the restaurant has a stunning view of the seacoast, Beach writes: "For the 460 people currently living in the abandoned restaurant/hotel, their view has been clouded by the fact they are refugees of the worst flood to hit Mozambique in 50 years."

Refugees at the centre are sleeping on the floors of the restaurant, while others are packed into damp, former hotel rooms. The centre has no running water, electricity or toilets.

After the flooding started, the two agencies quickly provided food supplies such as rice, peanuts, oil, sugar and beans to flood victims. MCC is also purchasing 5,000 survival kits and 20,000 blankets valued at $433,000 (Cdn.)

The survival kits include pots and pans, cups, plates, soap, two blankets, a water jug, plastic tarp and bucket. These kits will be distributed to families over the next few weeks.

In late April, MCC and CCM will distribute 17,000 school/health kits in Mozambique.

WORLD VISION

Three school-aged children, 2 girls and 1 boy, in Manjacaze, a village in southern Mozambique, sit on World Vision "survival kits."

For this week's Business Directory, please turn to page 21. Advertise in the directory for only $25 plus G.S.T. per issue.

Tolerance: a political virtue

Principalities & Powers

Although the ancients generally assumed a positive relationship between politics and virtue, we have effectively limited the political virtues to one: *tolerance*. After the religious wars of the 16th and 17th centuries, tolerance was supposed to entail a certain humility in the face of competing ultimate truth claims. However, in the final years of the 20th century the purveyors of tolerance had themselves become strident and intolerant, particularly of those confessing the traditional religious faiths, such as Christianity and Judaism.

In fact, tolerance is always limited and is necessarily tied to the differentiated responsibility of the several societal institutions. Take, for example, the ecclesial community. No one expects a Jewish synagogue to embrace those confessing Jesus as Son of God or Muhammed as God's prophet. Nor do we find it unusual that the Pope would bypass otherwise qualified Presbyterians in choosing Roman Catholic bishops. A Christian church unable, in the name of tolerance, to distinguish between Christian and nonchristian teachings is on the road to losing its confessional identity. In this respect an unqualified tolerance is hardly a virtue within the church community and may instead suggest the vice of indifference.

Tolerating religious diversity

However, outside the institutional church and in our capacity as citizens, we find good reason for tolerating a larger measure of religious diversity than would be fitting within the ecclesial setting. In the present age, prior to the Last Judgment, God is patient with unbelief, as implied in the parable of the wheat and the tares (Matthew 13:24-30).

Moreover, tolerance is also entailed in a refusal to attach eschatological pretensions to the state's task of maintaining justice. Government possesses a limited, delegated authority from God, but it does not possess the whole of this authority. In other words, the state is not God. It can neither save nor damn. To be sure, the state is called to do justice in a sinful world, but not to stamp out all sin and thereby bring about final and perfect justice. Only God through his Son can do this.

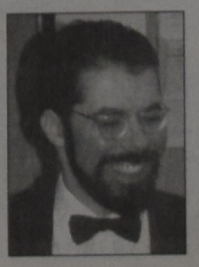
The state *is* obligated, in a fallen world, to protect the diversity of worldviews and to treat them in equitable fashion. This necessarily entails the protection of religious liberty, which means, among other things, that governments must offer equal protection to schools representing a variety of worldviews, be they Christian, Muslim, Buddhist or secular. Such equal protection need not assume, in relativistic fashion, that Christianity, Islam, Buddhism and secularism are all equally true, which is, of course, logically impossible.

It does assume, however, that the state does not possess the *institutional* competence to judge among alternative religious truth claims.

Politicians carry beliefs with them

To be sure, the various government officials wielding political authority are themselves Christians, Muslims, Buddhists and secular humanists. These officials do not forget or artificially bracket their religious commitments when they enter public life. In fact, one can expect their commitments to infuse and condition the ways they carry out their public duties.

Yet they are also mindful that the unique task of the state to do justice is not the same as the evangelical task of the institutional church. Each has a distinct responsibility to fulfil in God's world, and these ought not to be confused. In particular, the state's tolerance of religious diversity must not attempt to abrogate what may appear to many as the "intolerance" of the particular faith communities themselves. In other words, Catholics should be allowed to be Catholics, and Jews should be allowed to be Jews. Only in this way may we keep tolerance itself from becoming intolerant.



David T. Koyzis teaches political science at Redeemer College, Ancaster, Ontario. With this month's contribution he has written in this space for ten years. A fairly quiet person, he is surprised that he has had so much to say in this time.

News

Refugees 'immensely moved' by Christians' generosity

... continued from page 1

In the intervening nine years, the Foryohs' journey has been an amazing series of hardships and blessings, punctuated with glimpses of God's hand of grace.

In Guinea, George's family thought they'd be cared for by fellow Muslims. But that wasn't the case. "Not even one Muslim asked us how our conditions were. We were like a group of wild animals that had a stampede," he recalls. Well over a hundred thousand refugees were sleeping outside in the open, and soon the drinking streams were contaminated by human wastes.

COURTESY JESSIE SCHUT

George and Yatta (far right) and missionary friends in Dakar, Senegal, display the work that supported them while they waited to immigrate.

A miracle happened

Just when things were at their worst, with food almost non-existent, a miracle occurred that changed their life forever. A mission team from a North American church arrived.

"Those Christians didn't ask us our origin, tribe, or race, but brought abundant food, clothing, medication, and cash money and delivered them to us hand to hand," says George.

"They just gave and gave and gave," says Yatta. "Even when we would sneak back in line to get more, they knew what was happening, but they kept giving, anyway."

George and Yatta were immensely moved by the unconditional generosity of white Christians who had come across the ocean to help, while their own neighbors wouldn't even extend a hand. "A feeling came to me that Christianity is based on love because God Himself is love," says George. "It was this kind of random gift that touched my heart."

The Foryohs renounced their Muslim religion and declared in a local church that they now accepted "Christ until death because it is a true and godly path through Jesus to God."

Their new allegiance didn't mean, however, that their life suddenly became easier...far from it.

For three years, the family lived in Guinea. At one point they tried to operate a restaurant. But, says George, if you are a Christian, and hungry people come without money, you have to feed them. Since few refugees had money, and many were hungry, that venture ended in failure.

George finally got a contract with the United Nations to supply bundles of Savannah grass as roofing material to refugees who were building homes for themselves. It was at this point that "Mamma" (an older woman whom they had adopted into their family) revealed that she had relatives in Dakar, Senegal and urged them to take her there. With the $800 US George received from his contract, the family booked a taxi and stepped out in faith. A month later, in April of '94, with $10 left in their pocket, they finally arrived in Dakar.

"It was Christians who hosted us and took care of us until the United Nations stepped in with financial aid," says George. Christians also drew them into the church (International Baptist Church) and began discipling them. It was an important step; although they'd declared their allegiance to Christianity in Guinea, they'd found no real church home.

They also met people who helped them in other ways. One man taught them the art of tie-dying so they could earn a livelihood for themselves. They also met CRWRC workers Bev and Hank Abma at the church.

"On my next trip to Burlington, I presented their names to CRWRC. They soon found churches willing to sponsor them," recalls Bev. It was another glimpse of God's grace.

It was the beginning of another long wait for their refugee visas to be processed by the United Nations High Commission on Refugees (UNHCR). "We wondered, what is God doing?" said Yatta. "But now I understand that we still needed to learn a lot about living for Jesus, and the Christian community in Dakar was the best place to do it."

Steady spiritual growth

Missionaries took them through the Bible step by step. They learned to surrender their whole lives to Christ and to experience his lasting peace. The family began memorizing Scriptures and establishing a devotional life. They learned about prayer walking and meditating and worshipping. Both George and Yatta were baptized and began using their gifts of teaching in the Sunday School.

"In 1997, on a Friday just days before I was leaving Senegal for good," says Bev Abma, "I called the UNHCR. They told me the person who did interviews for visas was coming on Monday and would likely not be back for three years. George and Yatta were not on the list for interviews, but we arranged to get them on it." Finally, in October of '98, the Foryohs arrived in Edmonton.

The transition has not always been easy. George retrained for lab technology, but his unfamiliarity with computers has cost him his new job. He wonders how he can support his family on a job that doesn't even pay the rent. Yatta is often gone from home 12 hours a day as she studies. The fast-paced and impersonal Canadian lifestyle leaves little time for spiritual growth.

Tamba George Foryoh and his family have travelled a long and arduous road from war torn Sierra Leone to Canada. Along the way, North American dollars and Christian workers have changed their lives for eternity, and for this they are truly grateful.

But they suspect that Edmonton is only a way station. "Canada is a good and safe land, and we could easily become comfortable here," says Yatta. But back in Sierra Leone, there are so many people without hope, including their own families, needing to hear about Jesus whose love has made their lives so rich. "We want to go back some day and spread the gospel there."

Situation in Sierra Leone still desperate

Jessie Schut

EDMONTON — "The shoppers come in and all they're thinking about is groceries for their family," observes George Foryoh about his supermarket job. "In peaceful Canada, they have no idea of the atrocities that people are suffering on the other side of the globe."

But George knows. At his home he keeps a graphic news photograph of a dismembered torso of a young man, head and limbs arranged beside the body. The photo reminds him of the horrible plight his people are still suffering every day.

"After nine years of war, millions of people have been displaced," writes Augustine Marah of the Society for Canadians of West African Origin in a report to the Canadian Council for Refugees. "The rebels have inflicted irreparable damage on children not only by killing their parents but by forcing children as young as nine and ten years old into combat. The sick, the old and the weak have been abandoned to become casualties. Only a fraction of the displaced have managed to flee to neighbouring Liberia, Guinea, and Senegal. In Guinea alone, Foryoh estimates that the UN is operating more than a dozen refugee camps.

Sierra Leonians who have beaten the odds and have safely made it to Canada are often faced with immigration bills totalling, in Foryoh's case, more than $10,000. How, they wonder, can they possibly help their families back in Africa with this burden on their backs? They're pleading with the Canadian government to relax their immigration and refugee rules and airlift their remaining family members out of the conflict and turmoil. "We plead with all Canadians to look into the plight of our parents, brothers, sisters, cousins, nephews, and nieces who are languishing in over-crowded and disease-ridden refugee camps in Guinea," writes Marah.

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Guest Editorial

To what end?

Theodore Plantinga

What is the most haunting text in the Bible? Surely it is our Lord's agonizing cry from the cross: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Matthew 27:46).

On Good Friday, as we reflect on the depths of suffering and despair expressed in these words, we realize that we may never take such language lightly. There may be times when we are inclined to pronounce a place "God-forsaken." We may even do it, without quite realizing what we are saying. But then we pull back and wonder: How can the Creator and Redeemer forsake the works of his hands? Can he, indeed, forsake a place that he has made? The crucifixion story comes to mind: How can the Father forsake the Son? Why? To what end?

If we think strictly in terms of time, we see that the end came soon for the Savior on the cross. Matthew and Mark suggest that it was not long after uttering his heart-rending cry that our Lord breathed his last, at about the ninth hour. The agony he suffered was unbounded in its intensity, but it did not last forever.

And so it must be with human suffering that occurs today, long after the crucifixion. However pointless it may seem, since we know we cannot save ourselves through our agony, we can rest assured that it does not last forever. There comes an end.

To be forsaken by God *forever* is a horrible thought: it would be to suffer hell. Yet something like this is what we confess concerning our Lord. In the Apostles' Creed we find the famous phrase "descended into hell." Somehow, in that time of torment, humiliation and rejection, our Lord suffered agonies akin to eternal punishment and abandonment. Why? To what end?

We all know the answer: those things happened that we might be loosed from our sins! What a glorious purpose! God so loved the world that he sent his Son to win our salvation through his unfathomable suffering. And so it all makes sense.

Or does it? The haunting cry from the cross was sounded but once. We do not believe that these heart-rending events of redemptive history are repeated over and over, as though history were a cycle in which we keep coming back to the same point. Christ dies but once, Augustine insisted.

We commemorate his death each year on the special day we call Good Friday. But we also rejoice in the awareness that Christ's one sacrifice covers our sins for all time. He is no longer on the cross! His suffering did have an end! It was only for a time, and it culminated in his glorious resurrection. Not only was the time limited in duration; there was an end in the sense of a *purpose*. It makes sense.

Then why must *we* suffer long after he has risen from the grave and conquered death? Here we confront the central mystery of our faith. We yearn to find a *redemptive* meaning in our own suffering — or, perhaps, in the suffering of someone we love. Yet our theology forbids it.

Is human suffering then meaningless? Does it have no end?

It does have an end in temporal terms, of course. Every believer who suffers here on earth is eventually delivered — or he gives up the ghost. No one suffers eternally in this life. But what about an end in the deeper sense of a purpose?

Peter rejected the notion of an end in that second sense. Legend has it that when he was to be crucified, he asked to be crucified upside down, so that his death could in no sense be regarded as an imitation of what our Lord had suffered.

But not all of us are quite so determined when it comes to glorifying the Lord rather than ourselves. In many of us there is a deep impulse to view our own suffering — or the suffering of someone we love — as a necessary part of some grand redemptive process.

Are we to strip away any such thought as false comfort? Are we to declare that any such talk takes away from Christ's glory? Can we really look sufferers in the face and say such a thing — we who are hale and hearty? It almost seems cruel. Yet it seems to be required.

Peter must have been thinking about this knotty problem when he wrote: "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that in due time he may exalt you" (I Peter 5:6). Note that he does not exalt us *immediately*. He then adds: "Cast all your anxieties on him, for he cares about you" (vs. 7).

But Peter goes on to affirm that our adversary, the devil, also has something to do with our suffering. He counsels: "Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same experience of suffering is required of your brotherhood throughout the world. And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, establish, and strengthen you. To him be the dominion for ever and ever. Amen" (vs. 9-11).

I am struck by the phrase "a little while." How long is "a little while"? Remember that our sense of time's passing may well be out of step with God's. For him a thousand years are like a day, and vice versa (see II Peter 3:8 and Psalm 90:4).

Although we suffer now, in due time he will exalt us. Count on it, says Peter.

"How long?" we wonder. In our impatience we are inclined to call God unjust. But Peter, the same writer who equates a thousand days with a day in God's sight, assures us that we will only suffer "a little while."

To what end? Do we suffer so that we may claim that status of co-redeemer, with Christ? No, Peter promises that God will restore, establish and strengthen us. But in this exaltation we do not claim a share of the glory that would otherwise belong to the Savior. Rather, we share in his benefits.

Let us then, on this special day, focus our minds and hearts on the suffering of the Savior — and not on what *we*, or someone we love in a special way, may have suffered, or may continue to suffer. In all such suffering we may look ahead to the end — in terms of time.

But the grand and glorious purpose (end in the other sense) attaches only to the suffering of our Lord. Of him Paul says that "though he was in the form of God, [he] did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name which is above every name" (Philippians 2:6-9).

Let us then adore that name above every name, the name of him who chose to suffer on our behalf, feeling in his flesh the ultimate rejection, so that the prophet, looking ahead, could write: "By his stripes we are healed" (Isaiah 53:5). On those stripes we meditate this special day, looking forward to the climax of the story in the empty tomb.

Theodore Plantinga teaches philosophy at Redeemer University College, in Ancaster, Ont., and is the author of several books that make Christian philosophical reflection accessible to the layperson.

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Canada's religious landscape is about to be redefined

Keith Knight

Canada's Christian denominations are being drawn together in ways unimaginable a decade ago. And the rallying point is the residential schools issue. Small denominations are providing moral support for Canada's largest denominations; there is a coming together — at least in spirit — of the Canadian Council of Churches and the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada.

Four denominations are facing thousands of lawsuits involving millions of dollars, a notion which could bankrupt a denomination or two. This is serious business. At minimum, a number of churches will have to close their doors and their buildings will have to be sold to pay the debt. At minimum, a diocese (classis or presbytery) or two will have to sell all its assets and declare bankruptcy.

The issue by now is very public. Between about 1820 and 1969, the Government of Canada was determined to assimilate First Nations communities into the Canadian mainstream. It was thought that the quickest way to 'civilize' and 'convert' natives was to forcibly remove their children from their homes and place them in residential schools. Parents were jailed if they refused to give up their children.

The Government of Canada established the policy and provided the funds, and the Church provided the staff. Consequently, the Roman Catholic, Anglican, United and Presbyterian churches, in co-operation with the government, operated these schools.

Thousands of those boarding school children grew up into several generations of First Nations peoples. Many of them are suing the Government of Canada and the respective churches (each suit identifies the government and a denomination) for various forms of abuse. Most of those suits are for cultural abuse, with smaller numbers for physical and sexual abuse.

Alternative ways to address concerns

The government and the four denominations are seeking alternative ways to address the concerns of the native people. Their respective assemblies have issued public confessions of sin with respect to the residential schools era. Both government and denominations are looking at alternative dispute resolutions such as community healing circles to bring together the accused and the accusers. The intention is to come to a reasonable out-of-court settlement and, more importantly, to provide for mutual healing of the pain caused by this process.

The residential schools issue requires considerable human resources. The federal government has assigned a large staff to deal with the issue. The denominations' senior staff are suddenly thrust into issues of law and litigation and devote increasing time to the growing mound of suits. This has led to considerable inter-denominational dialogue and the creation of working groups to hammer out issues and arrive at a common front.

In recent months, the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada — which consists of generally smaller evangelical denominations — has offered its support to those denominations which are struggling. Janet Somerville, executive director of the Canadian Council of Churches, says that support is heartwarming. She also said that, while the Roman Catholic, United, Anglican and Presbyterian churches are called 'mainline churches', that really is a misnomer. "The church is no longer mainline; secularism is." She embraced the rallying cry of Christian denominations and indicated that closer co-operation among denominations is not only welcome but necessary in this increasingly secular age.

The residential schools issue will live with the Canadian churches for the next few years as test cases make their way through the court system. It may take three years before the bulk of them are resolved. Meanwhile, the four denominations will continue to set aside hundreds of thousands of dollars (in some cases, a million dollars) annually in legal fees and develop contingency plans to meet their legal obligations once the courts make the decisions. The Anglican Church of Canada is expected to be the most severely affected by the suits; so is the Roman Catholic Church at the diocesan (classis) level and then the United Church of Canada. The Presbyterian Church in Canada has the fewest number of claims against it because it operated the fewest number of residential schools.

The tremendous threat to denominational capital is bound to have a profound effect upon the religious landscape in Canada. One can expect to see a larger role for non-mainline churches, especially those involved in the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada.

The litigation will also have a dramatic impact upon the three largest denominations and their mission outreach. Most of the denominations have put a hold on new mission endeavors. Only the Presbyterian Church has budget amounts for new church development and for increased mission activity. This may result in new partnerships and alliances, new ways of planting churches, and innovative approaches to mission.

The residential schools issue may prove to become the turning point in Canadian Christian history. These are both exciting and traumatic times.

Keith Knight works with the Presbyterian Church of Canada.

Glad CC isn't "like it used to be"

I'm another reader who's glad CC isn't "like it used to be". (Letter to the Editor, March 6). I read almost every article in every issue, and don't mind that it comes every second week so that I can keep up to date. I especially enjoyed your annual Education Issue (March 6), particularly columnists Heidi VanderSlikke and Arlene Van Hove. Thank you, Rev.Hulst Antonides, for your sensitive and sensible column on "living together". Thanks also to "Two under 35" for daring to tackle the subject of death. Of course it's a morbid subject, but that shouldn't keep us from talking about it. In fact, you might devote an issue to facts about the "death" industry, the importance of pre-planning, and other issues related to this subject.

Though I do miss Bert, and no doubt his shoes were hard to fill, I for one think you're doing a great job. By all means go for the ecumenical audience while staying with the Reformed perspective (Editorial, March 6). Keep up the good work, and God bless.

Cathy Ypma
Thunder Bay, Ont.

A lot wrong with postmodernism

Peter Schuurman in his Campus Culture column of March 20, 2000, regretted the diatribe against postmodernism by some prominent Christians. While some aspects of postmodernism may be acceptable to Christians, there is also a lot wrong with the theory. Two titles may give a clue: Keith Windschuttle's book "*The Killing of History: How Literary Critics and Social Theorists Are Murdering Our Past*" (New York: Free Press, 1997), and William G. Dever's article "Save Us from Postmodern Malarkey" in "*Biblical Archaeology Review*" of March/April 2000. Maybe those prominent Christians were not so cavalier as Schuurman suggested.

Bert den Boggende
Lacombe, Alta.

Antonides missed Rodman's other side

When I finished reading Tim Antonides' column ("After the Buzzer," titled 'Dennis does Dallas'), I had to agree with everything that Mr. Antonides says about Dennis Rodman. He is crass, he is obnoxious, he is "over-the-top", and he is just plain weird.

What I failed to see in the column was another side to Dennis Rodman, the side which gives hundreds of thousands of dollars to children's charities and who after every game searches out a child in the crowd to give his basketball jersey to.

There also was not a description of him as a basketball player. He is arguably the greatest NBA rebounder in history. Did it even occur to Mr. Antonides that some of the basketball fans in Dallas went to watch Dennis play basketball instead of going to watch his antics?

I also question the title given to the piece. Is a play on words of a pornographic movie really an appropriate title for the *Christian Courier*? Just wondering.

Kevin Tamming
Orangeville, Ont.

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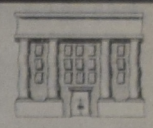
More talk, less sex

Campus Culture



Peter Schuurman

Popular perception is that the campus is rampant with sexual activity. Hollywood, at least, portrays the campus not as a place to be introduced to academic culture, but as a raucous party in which sexual promiscuity is as taken-for-granted as pub crawls and football games. While relationship thrills and spills are a good part of anyone's education, and the sexual energy and tension between the sexes will forever stir the classroom, I wonder how much of popular perception fits with reality.

The campus here can be deceiving. Orientation week features plays for frosh like "My Dick", the campus newspaper has its share of sexual innuendo, and some hallways have posters warning about date rape, unwanted pregnancy, and sexually transmitted diseases. You get the feeling that it's a vital issue for student life — its agonies as much as its ecstacies. And it is — but not in the way you might think.

Everybody's doing it — not

I asked the Residence Program Co-ordinator, Tammy Brown, about the sex culture on campus. "I think there is a general misperception out there that 'everyone is doing it,'" she said. While the dons are trained to deal with basic issues and condoms are available all over, there is more talk and curiosity than action. Residence Life has some information available on most important issues, and they sponsor an annual "Sex Fest" where students meet and write down questions addressed to the opposite sex about dating and sexual issues. Two student facilitators — one male, one female — read the questions and moderate the discussion.

"University is a place to learn — to learn about yourself, especially," says Ms. Brown. "Don't give in to peer pressure. Never sacrifice yourself. Be informed." Why? Because what you don't know can hurt you.

My next visit was to the Sexual Harassment Adviser, Ann Bown, who has an office down the hall from me. She told me about another misperception that still reigns in our culture: the double standard. People still assume that its OK for a man to be sexually promiscuous — he's the "stud." But if a woman even looks sexually promiscuous, she is labelled a "slut." Ms. Bown organizes a "Just Sex. .·. ?" discussion for students every year which focuses on educating students in proper communication about sexual matters. "We talk — talk about feelings, limits, and listening," she said. "And about sexual assault laws."

Sexual harassment policy

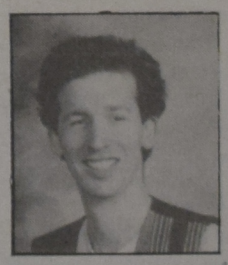
Ms. Bown administers the sexual harassment policy on campus primarily through education, although she also hears and deals with any complaints that may arise on campus. Sexual harassment is "any behaviour of a verbal or physical nature that is reasonably known to be unwanted or behaviour that creates a hostile environment for a specific individual or group." And it's not just male professors with female students — it's male to male, student to student — whatever. Some people are predators," she said quite bluntly.

"I don't care whether you're traditional or modern," she concluded, "we have to treat each other with respect. That's non-negotiable. Respect."

Sex is over-rated

It appears there are many resources on campus where one can get some good information on sexual matters — especially when things go awry. Abstinence was mentioned as a personal option, but the university assumes no moral authority beyond legal and policy concerns of harassment and assault. One thing is for sure, the campus is not shy about sex. Maybe the church could learn from that. More talk — more wise, life-giving talk, and less hurt.

Sexuality is a sensitive and elusive topic, blurred with numerous myths. If in the sixties the cry was "question authority" perhaps the protest today should be "question consensus." What appears to be the taken-for-granted norm may be a silly fable. As the younger generation would put it: "Sex is over-rated."



Peter Schuurman is the Christian Reformed campus chaplain at Brock University, in St. Catharines, Ont.

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The Word of God ... according to kids

Source unknown

The following statements about the Bible were written by children and have not been retouched or corrected:

- In the first book of the Bible, Guinessis, God got tired of creating the world, so he took the Sabbath off.
- Adam and Eve were created from an apple tree.
- Noah's wife was called Joan of Ark.
- Samson was a strongman who let himself be led astray by a Jezebel like Delilah.
- Samson slayed the Philistines with the axe of the Apostles.

- Moses led the Hebrews to the Red Sea, where they made unleavened bread which is bread without any ingredients.
- The Egyptians were all drowned in the dessert. Afterwards, Moses went up on Mount Cyanide to get the ammendments.
- The first commandment was when Eve told Adam to eat the apple.
- Moses died before he ever reached Canada. Then Joshua led the Hebrews in the battle of Geritol.
- Solomon, one of David's sons, had 300 wives and 700 porcupines.
- The people who followed the Lord were called the 12 decibels.
- The epistles were the wives of the apostles.
- One of the possums was St. Matthew who was also a taximan.
- The greatest miracle in the Bible is when Joshua told his son to stand still and he obeyed him.

Arts/Media

Journey into 50 years of aid work

Christian Photo Exhibit Opens in Toronto

Nandy Heule

When we stop to focus on an image, that image starts to transcend and help us feel what others have to live through, said a World Vision spokesperson at the recent opening of a photo exhibit marking 50 years of international aid work.

The exhibit *Point of View [a World Vision]* runs at SOF Art House in Toronto from March 24 to April 23.

Standing in front of a large photo of the massive Ethiopian famine in the mid-1980s, Denis St. Amour, chairman of World Vision Canada, said "These photos remind us of people's struggles, but also how we can continue to make a difference." The site at which the famine photo was snapped by Steve Reynolds in 1984 has been transformed into a bounteous orchard, providing food and income to local farmers.

A lasting impression

Stella Fakiyesi, owner of SOF Art House, said she hopes the photo exhibit will make a lasting impression on her guests.

"This is an exhibition of widely familiar yet seldom seen photographs," said Fakiyesi.

She said, "By stepping into the margins of dominating and powerful post-colonial regimes, these photos confide in each of us 50 years of struggle, fear, displacement, physical nourishment and ultimately hope."

Exhibit shows disaster responses

The exhibit shows images from World Vision's disaster responses from Operation Seasweep — which rescued Vietnamese boat refugees in the late 1970s — to the ethnic conflicts in Kosovo last year. Other photos portray World Vision's international development work such as water projects in Louga, Senegal and literacy programs in Phayao, Thailand.

Philip Maher, a long-term World Vision photographer, says photography in general has formed public opinion on the state of humanity.

"The photos I take for World Vision have allowed people to see into lives which they could never live," he said.

For example, the world did not know famine was threatening in Southern Sudan in 1998 until Maher traveled through the isolated region and released pictures of desperately hungry children waiting with their families on the dusty plains surrounding World Vision's feeding centres.

"The 1998 Sudan photos kick started a worldwide relief response for these very needy children," said Maher.

World Vision has been responding to poverty, disaster and injustice for 50 years. It all started when Tina Holkeboer, an overworked missionary teacher in China, challenged a young evangelist to put his faith into action and provide tangible care to an abandoned little girl. Bob Pierce, founder of World Vision, met Holkeboer's challenge and spent the rest of his life serving God by serving the poor.

Today, World Vision is one of the largest relief and development agencies in the world, working with over 1.5 million children, their families and communities in 87 countries.

Point of View [a World Vision] is open to the public free of charge and most photos on display are for sale with a portion of proceeds going to World Vision. The gallery is at 688 Richmond Street West, Ground Floor, Toronto. Doors are open Tuesday - Friday from 11 a.m. until 7:30 p.m. with earlier weekend closings.

Call 416-203-0069 or visit www.sofhouse.com.

WORLD VISION PHOTO

A featured photo from Point of View [a World Vision].

Web television

Ron de Boer

Back in the mid-60s, our family's first television arrived the morning I was born — a light gray box, with but two knobs, perched atop strangely splayed legs. In 1975, we got our first colour set — a cabinet-style RCA with bunny ears and a mahogany finish that rivalled the dining room table.

The 80s ushered in a TV era of remote controls and VCRs, giving viewers control and viewing privacy, while the 90s perfected picture quality and offered more specialty channels. With the dawning of a new millennium, television has begun yet another transformation, the melding of computers and television, potentially making TV-watching the most interactive experience in media today. What is interactive television? And how will interactive television change our lives?

Interacting with TVs like never before

The huge media merger between a traditional media company, *Time Warner* — which owns influential magazines, film studios and TV networks — and a new media company, *America Online* — one of the most influential Internet service providers — has everyone just a little worried about media's power in today's culture. With television networks merging with the Internet, we will no longer be mere couch potatoes. We will be interacting with our televisions like never before. WebTV Plus, the service that gives both television and Internet options on one screen, has about 450,000 subscribers already in the U.S. This year, AT&T will include Microsoft's TV software in 10 million new cable boxes while DirecTV will offer similar software to 4 million new homes. The AOL-TV device will also make its debut this year. Five years from now, according to Forrester Research, at least 24 million households will have access to enhanced television broadcasts, internet TV advertising will be an $11 billion business and TV-based online shopping will ring up $10 billion in sales.

What will it look like? In its most simple definition, interactive television means you will be able to surf the Internet while watching TV. That is, you can view ER and look up information about a book at the Chapters website at the same time. But television shows are already figuring out ways to get you to "participate" in the TV show by using the Internet. For example, we will be able to vote on whether or not Judge Judy will side with the plaintiff in Judge Judy. You will be able to guess the answer on Who Wants to be a Millionaire for a prize. Or you can simply play hangman while watching a Cosby rerun.

Shades of interactive TV are already with us. Hockey Night in Canada allows viewers to pick the three stars over the Internet. New Nike "action-adventure" commercials now abruptly end, instructing viewers to log onto the Internet to see how the story will end. Torontonians subscribing to regular cable TV get Cable Pulse 24, an informational TV "page" where they can get live camera views of Toronto's freeways, the three-day weather forecast, a headline ticker, sports scores, lottery numbers and a live news window.

A stronger foothold

The problem with interactive television is that advertisers and media gain an even stronger foothold in our lives. Media companies and advertisers will be able to track, study and use our viewing habits, interests and purchasing decisions. How long will it be before advertisers target households with specific ads based on knowledge about us? How long before we'll have to choose our own commercials to continue the program we're watching? Is it science fiction to think we might have to participate in commercials, thus keeping us glued to the set before a program continues?

How long before we're totally immersed in a TV and commercial culture? With the evolution of WebTV and the mergers of media giants Time-Warner and AOL, it is no longer a fantasy story to suggest we have been invited into the world of television. Soon the invisible hands of media corporations will be in our pockets — and the transformation will be so subtle we won't even realize it. And perhaps the most alarming trend of all will be the increased number of hours we will watch television.

Back in 1938, at The World's Fair in New York where the TV was first introduced, a New York Times culture columnist predicted that the "television fad" would die out soon because he couldn't see human beings wasting their time several hours a day sitting in front of a box. In just sixty years, we watch more TV than any single activity other than sleep.

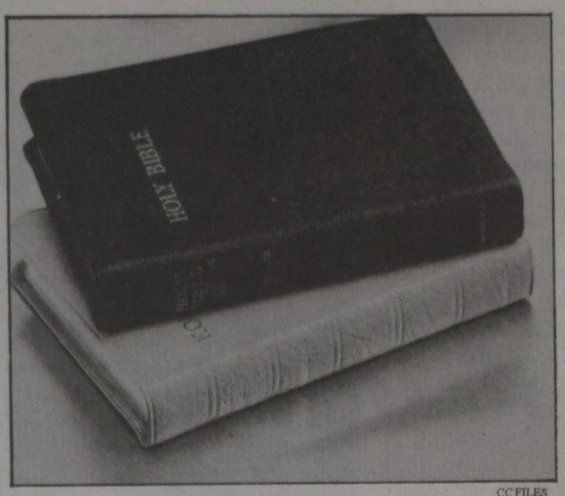
According to Walter Mueller, in Understanding Today's Youth, by age six, most kids will have spent more time watching TV than they will spend with their fathers in a lifetime. With WebTV, television is bound to become even more prominent in our lives as we move further into the 2000s. The question for all of us is: how far will we let it go and how long will we celebrate it?

One billion Bibles around the world

MALAWI (Religion Today) — The Gideons are passing out Bibles in schools around the world. Representatives of Gideons International, which has distributed almost 1 billion Bibles in 100 years, are visiting schools in many countries.

More than 1,000 high school students in Malawi mobbed a team of Gideons handing out Bibles in their school, the ministry said. Team members explained the Gospel to the students and were handing out small New Testaments when the students rushed them because the Gideons were running out of books. School administrators calmed the crowd and the team returned the next day to donate Scriptures to the remaining students.

More than 30 students in Peru became Christians as a result of visits by the Gideons, and are holding Bible studies with their Gideon Bibles, the ministry said. Some teachers are asking the Gideons to explain spiritual principles.



CC FILES

Students in Armenia presented a bouquet of flowers to a team that visited their school, the ministry said. The team spent 45 minutes explaining the Gospel, then handed out the New Testaments. A girl said her sick mother had received a Gideon Bible in the hospital and had recovered after reading it. "Today, all of the family has accepted Christ as their personal savior," the ministry said.

Korean Chinese face North Korean refugee dilemma

CHINA (Compass) — China expects an upsurge of North Korean refugees in March and April, as snow and ice melts along mountain trails enabling more North Koreans to sneak across the border. Ethnic Korean Christians in China face unenviable risks in sheltering them. "This past year the Chinese government has cracked down on refugees," said the head of one Korean-Chinese family.

"We tried to shelter five families last year, but they were all sent back from our small town, and we heard they all died in a labor camp." The families were "sternly lectured" by Chinese police that if they sheltered any more refugees they would be fined 2,000 yuan (about two years' wages).

Official Chinese figures state that 10,000 North Korean refugees were sent back last year from China, and that there may be up to 30,000 still in China. But sources among the many Korean Chinese living near the border say the numbers are much higher. The upsurge of refugees is expected because one of the worst winters in memory has taken its toll on a flood-and-famine-devastated North Korea.

Desecrating church not considered a hate crime

MONTREAL (EP) — Violent attacks and vandalism against a church is a hate crime in Canada — unless the attackers have a left-wing, politically correct agenda. A group of abortion supporters stormed Mary Queen of the World Catholic Cathedral in Montreal on March 7, shouting pro-abortion slogans and littering the cathedral with condoms, sanitary napkins, women's underwear and bras.

The attack began outside the cathedral where the group spray painted "Religion, a trap for fools" on the front pillars and burned crosses on the cathedral steps. Inside the group continued vandalizing the church, painting "Neither God nor master" on the altar, overturning flowerpots and tearing up hymnals.

Members of the group also stole altar cloths. Six adults and one minor, who had splintered off from a larger crowd celebrating International Women's Day in a different location, continued the tirade until stopped by police.

Four women and three men were arrested and later charged with "unlawful assembly." But other charges, including those for hate crimes, vandalism and theft, were not brought against the group.

Drug lords converted

MEDELLIN, Colombia (Religion Today) — Drug lords in Medellin, Colombia, are turning to the Lord of Lords. Fourteen of 17 members of a drug cartel that once ruled the city have professed faith in Christ, said Maria Estrada, who started a ministry in Colombia's Bellavista Prison. More than 300 prisoners belong to a church there, she told Discipling a Whole Nation.

Notorious drug kingpin Pablo Escobar professed faith in Christ just days before his death, Estrada said. Escobar called her one day and they began a correspondence that culminated in his "giving his life to God."

Since then 13 others have become Christians and confessed their crimes, Estrada said. Two have been freed from prison and are serving as missionaries in other countries.

Conservative renewal groups in mainline churches

MARKHAM, Ont. (Religion Today) — Conservative members of mainline denominations in Canada have formed almost a dozen renewal groups. They share the common goal of bringing their denominations back to historic Christian orthodoxy, *Faith Today* magazine reported.

Canada's largest denomination, the United Church of Canada, reported it has 700,000 members, much smaller than a decade ago because of decisions to allow practicing homosexuals to be ordained. Community of Concern, the largest of the UCC's three renewal groups, sends its newsletter to about 20,000 people, *Faith Today* said.

Other renewal groups in Canada include the National Alliance of Covenanting Congregations, Church Alive, Anglican Essentials, Barnabas Anglican Ministries, Anglican Renewal Ministries, the Prayer Book Society of Canada, and the Renewal Fellowship within the Presbyterian Church of Canada.

The groups are ignored or barely tolerated by the church hierarchy, they say, but have provided a rallying point for Christians who hold conservative beliefs and want to stay in their denominations to work for change. "I'm not sure God is quite finished with the mainline churches yet," one member said.

Climate Change Fast Fact

(NC)—Under the Kyoto Protocol, Canada has a target to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions to six percent below 1990 levels by the period between 2008 and 2012. This will require major changes in the way we produce and use energy at home, at work and on the road. More about Canada's action on climate change is available at www.climatechange.gc.ca or call 1-800-OCANADA.

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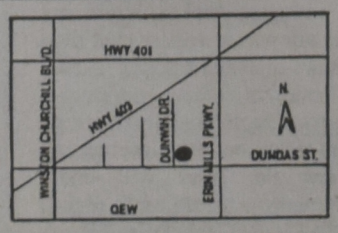

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Annual study of religious behavior finds little change since 1999

GLENDALE, Calif. (EP) - The biggest news in the latest study of religious beliefs and behaviors from the Barna Research Group is that there's no big news. In fact, there was no change in nine of the 10 factors the company follows in its yearly tracking survey.

Bible reading makes comeback

The one area of change was Bible reading, which appears to be making a comeback, with more than 40 percent of adults now reading the Bible in a typical week. The growth in Bible reading seems to be fueled by greater commitment among blacks, low-income individuals, and men.

Despite the rising readership levels among men, though, women are still substantially more likely than men to read the Bible during a typical week. Protestant adults are much more likely than Catholic adults to read the Bible during the week (53 percent vs. 38 percent, respectively). Self-identified born-again Christians are three times more likely than non-born again adults to read the Bible (65 percent vs. 23 percent), but not as likely as evangelicals (92 percent).

Other figures of religious activity remained the same as last year. For instance, the study found that four out of 10 adults (40 percent) attend a church service on a typical Sunday. That's a significant drop from the early 1990s when close to half of all Americans attended services in a typical week, but the figure is relatively unchanged since 1994.

'Baby busters' less likely to attend church

"Baby Busters" ages 18-34 are notably less likely than older adults to attend church services (28 percent compared to 51 percent of adults age 55 and older). Woman are more likely to attend church than men, and adults who identify themselves as political and social conservatives are almost twice as likely to attend church as self-identified liberals.

Born-again Christians (defined in the surveys as people who say they have made a personal commitment to Jesus Christ that is still important in their life today and who say they know they will go to heaven after they die because they have confessed their sins and accepted Jesus Christ as their savior) still represent about four out of every 10 adults (41 percent). That's a figure that's remained steady since 1995. Born-again Christians are more likely to be women than men, black rather than white, and older rather than younger.

More Protestants than Catholics 'born again'

The study found that 60 percent of Protestants meet the criteria for being born again, compared to 25 percent of Catholics. Conservatives are more than twice as likely to be born again as liberals (57 percent to 22 percent).

Evangelicals, a subset of the born-again population, also have a traditional, biblical view of God and other beliefs in common, such as a high view of Scripture, the sinlessness of Jesus, salvation by grace and not works, and a personal responsibility to share their faith with nonbelievers. Evangelicals represent eight percent of the adult population, a figure unchanged since 1993, when it was at 11 percent.

Evangelicals most religiously active

Evangelicals are the most religiously active Christians, with the highest rates of church attendance (80 percent weekly), Bible reading (92 percent weekly), sharing their faith (81 percent per year), giving money to their church (94 percent per month), and volunteering at church (48 percent weekly).

Other factors also remained constant. Donations are steady, with slightly more than half of adults (54 percent) giving money in a typical month. Small groups in churches continue to attract about 17 percent of all adults, including 30 percent of born-again Christians and 55 percent of evangelicals. Adult participation in Sunday School remains at about 19 percent in a typical week, a decline from the early 1990s.

George Barna, president of the company that conducts the survey, said the study found a significant mission field for American churches. "In a typical week, about four out of every 10 people sitting in the pews of Christian churches are not born again. Although the figures are substantially different in Protestant churches than Catholic churches, more than one-third of the Protestant attenders are not born again.

A fertile mission field

"They certainly represent an accessible and fertile mission field for churches that have a desire to introduce people to the notion of salvation by grace." Barna said the idea that there is a religious revival taking place in America appears to be a myth.

"There does not seem to be revival taking place in America," he said. "Whether that is measured by church attendance, born again status, or theological purity, the statistics simply do not reflect a surge of any noticeable proportions.

"The increase in Bible reading may be setting the stage for such a revival, but it does not appear to be occurring at the moment."

Still, there are signs of hope in the current data. "It is important to realize that there are some signs of continued interest and growth," Barna concluded.

Faith a high priority

"The level of importance assigned by people to their religious faith is very high; two-thirds say their faith is very important to them. More than four out of five people pray during the week. Bible reading is on the increase. Half of all adults claim to have a devotional or quiet time at least once during a typical week.

"And the fact that church attendance has remained stable while participation in virtually every other form of traditional activity — including the frequency of watching television, exercising, reading for pleasure, and spending time with the family — has declined in recent years.

"Spirituality remains important to people, but we're still in a shake-up period where people are trying to discover how to fit it into their increasingly fragmented, busy and changing lives. Few people are seeking to remove God from their life. They're just not sure when and how often they will pencil Him into their schedule."

The study is based on telephone interviews with a nationwide sample of 1,002 adults and has a maximum sampling error of plus or minus three percent at the 95 percent confidence level.

Sneering at the resurrection

Chapter & Verse
Al Wolters

"'In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent. For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to all men by raising him from the dead.' When they heard about the resurrection of the dead, some of them sneered, but others said, 'We want to hear you again on this subject.'" (Acts 17:31-32, NIV)

Paul is speaking to the members of the Areopagus in Athens, a group of citizens who were concerned with the religion and morals of this cultural capital of the ancient world. He had remarked to them that he had seen an altar in the city which bore the inscription, "To an unknown god," and used this as an occasion to preach to them the gospel. He tells them that he serves the God who has created everything, and that they have lived in ignorance of this Creator God. Although this almighty God is prepared to overlook their earlier ignorance, the time has now come for them to repent, because judgment is coming.

From praise to challenge

In very short order Paul moves from praising the Athenians for their religiosity ("I see that in every way you are very religious"), and connecting with their own altar to the unknown god, to challenging them very directly by speaking of their ignorance in the past, their need for repentance now, and the coming judgment in the future. Whatever goodwill he may have garnered by initially identifying with the religious sensibilities of the Athenians he soon risks losing by his uncompromising straight talk about the situation of fallen humanity.

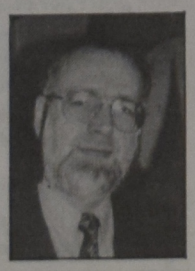
But that is not all. The apostle now connects the unwelcome notion of a coming judgment with the equally unpalatable notion of a specific man who will act as the God-appointed judge of the world — a man whose divine credentials have been established by his resurrection from the dead.

At this, Paul loses his audience. His hearers were sophisticated Greek intellectuals, and they had no patience for this kind of foolishness. It was bad enough to be told that they, who considered themselves to belong to the most enlightened cultural elite of the world, had lived for centuries in religious and moral ignorance, and needed to repent in order to avoid divine retribution, but it was adding insult to injury to claim that an individual human being whom they had never heard of would be their judge, and that he had died and come to life again. That God could become a man, and that he could suffer death and rise again, was something that did not fit in the categories of Greek thought. Especially the idea of the resurrection was completely foreign to their inherited ways of thinking.

Responses to the message of Easter

The reaction of the Areopagus members is both telling and instructive. Some "sneered" (the Greek word suggests mocking or scoffing at something), and some fobbed off the apostle by saying they would like to listen to him again on some later occasion. But the two reactions are really just rude and polite versions of the same response: unbelief. The proclamation of the resurrection — the message of Easter — is likely to provoke sneering laughter or polite dismissal, today as much as in Paul's day. Easter does not fit into the "plausibility structure" of any age.

But that is not the whole story. It is not strictly true to say that Paul lost his audience when he began to speak of the resurrection, or that the only reaction we can expect from the confession of the reality of Easter is unbelief and rejection. If we read the verses which follow the passage we have quoted, we discover that a few did become believers in reaction to Paul's preaching, including a member of the Areopagus called Dionysius. The Holy Spirit can and does use the foolishness of preaching to drive home the truth of the gospel. That is as true today as it was in Paul's day.



Al Wolters teaches Bible and Greek at Redeemer College, Ancaster, Ontario. He believes that the "antithesis" should not be played off against "common grace."

The "us" can never be "just us"

Elbert van Donkersgoed

"Give us this day our daily bread," is a well-known phrase from the Lord's Prayer. Jesus himself recommended this prayer to his disciples. To this day, Christians draw on these words in worship, in praise and times of quiet reflection.

But why do we, in North America, pray: "Give us this day our daily bread" when we live in a time of unprecedented abundance?

On any given day, our televisions bring us sad news stories — back-to-back stories about starvation in Africa and Saskatchewan farmers going broke because of low prices — caused by surplus food production.

Butter mountain, wine lake

Not long ago world farm commodity prices were dragged down by the butter mountain in the European Union and their wine lake — surpluses. To this day the US uses massive export subsidies to keep their grain moving, or it would be piling up on the prairies. In Canada, for 1998 and 1999 our federal government has committed 1.6 billion dollars, recently topped up with another 400,000,000, for an assistance program for farmers to make up for low, low prices — caused by surpluses.

Images of plenty flood our TV screens and superstore advertising fliers. Yet we know there are millions in the world who go to bed hungry every evening. Hunger in a time of abundance.

And now genetic modification has arrived. If we harness it well, the creation's harvest will be even more abundant for us in North America. But will the headlines from Africa be any different?

We are about to add the test tube and transgenic tools as a source of our abundance. To the plentiful gifts of good land, of sunshine and of rain we are adding human ingenuity. Can Africa?

Africa needs help with improvements in basic technology — a better wheelbarrow, maintenance free water pumps, grain storage that is rodent proof, farmers study groups or double cropping. Sixty percent of the world's farmers are women producing food for their families and some extra for the local market. Can they afford Monsanto's technology use agreements?

Transnational food merchants have positioned the technology to boost developed world production — our production — our surplus production. Billions in research is focused on the crops of the prosperous world. Why do we pray: "Give us this day our daily bread" amidst such abundance? The "us" can never be "just us" — just our family, just our Canada, just our rich and developed western world. Our prayer is for all peoples.

Genetic modification that is focused on our supermarket shelves already groaning with cans, boxes, bottles and bags of our favourite delectables is profoundly misplaced. Genetic modification cannot hope to win our wholehearted support until it is focused on the daily bread of those without the basic necessities of life.

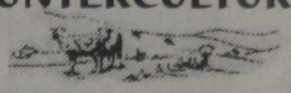
Elbert van Donkersgoed is Executive Director of the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario.

Spring!

"— you will go out and leap like calves released from the stall."
Mal. 4:2 (NIV)

COUNTRY COUNTERCULTURE

VERN M. GLEDDIE



About the third week in March the first Canada geese returned, the snow began melting and my grandson, Isaiah, two, who lives on the farm, made the most of the puddles. One day I was cleaning away winter debris from the yard while keeping an eye on the young fellow. I turned away only for a minute and he was sitting in the middle of a puddle pounding his mitts into the muck. What a glorious time of the year.

Sun-tanning cows

Spring brings with it an increasing warmth from the sun. In the mornings, like fanatical sun-tanners, the cattle all stand broad-side to the sun to catch the maximum benefit from its rays. The sun begins to melt the snow on the south side of buildings and haystacks. Migrating birds return. The first are usually crows. This is the one time of the year I do not mind their raucous calls. Sometime around the first week in April, water breaks out from where it has collected behind ice dams in pot-holes and sloughs. Our children always kept a vigil for the annual charge of a torrent of water through the farm yard from a near-by slough.

Such is the power of the season that some of my own earliest memories are of Spring's arrival. I have a clear picture in my mind of a particular golden morning on the prairie at lambing camp, located on a peninsula of land surrounded on three sides by slough. My mother was the cook for the lambing crew and I was along, not more than three years old. Warm Spring zephyrs tugged at my clothing while birds wheeled through sunny blue skies, their cries a symphony of joy. The smell of sage perfumed the air. Those sounds and smells still bring back that magic moment.

Creation awakening from sleep

Reaching school age, I envied my father and his men making the annual Spring trek with the sheep from wintering quarters 12 miles back to summer pasture. In the procession were thousands of sheep trailed by sheepherders and dogs. The sheepherder's camps were pulled by teams of horses. Meadowlarks stationed on fenceposts and sage brush welcomed Spring and the passing herd.

It was an adventure. More than that, it was an opportunity to observe a big picture of creation awakening from its long winter sleep. I was never able to go, but finally one year the move was to be on a Saturday and I plotted to go in spite of that being piano lesson day. My mother, unfortunately, didn't see things my way and, after a pummelling with a stick, I was on my way to piano lessons and lost opportunity.

I live 250 miles further North now and meadowlarks don't come here. I am willing, though, to accept the imitation of the meadowlark call that the starlings bring. I am happy, too, to have other birds to welcome Spring. The chickadee, for instance, though it is here year round, totally changes its call at the end of Winter. Before we knew better, we would think we heard the arrival of the "Spring bird".

I suppose the name "Spring" comes from the springing forth of life at that time of year. Crocuses pop up, sometimes out of the snow. The young of both wild and domestic species spring forth and spring across the fields. I always enjoy the lightness of step that first time when heavy winter clothing and boots can be shed. I want to buck and bawl like the calf let out of its winter stall.

'I am making all things new'

Hope someone said, springs eternal. The closer I get to the winter years of life, the more I think about the prospect of being made new along with everything else. But Jesus' words, "I am making all things new" means a work is already in progress and I have no reason to languish here. Anthony A. Hoekema concludes his book, *The Bible and the Future*, with these words: "As we live on this earth we are preparing for life on God's new earth – in the confidence of hope."

Vern Gleddie has a sheep ranch near Edmonton, Alberta.

Christians make hay to make the sun shine

Christians are helping deliver hay to mid-Atlantic farmers hurt by last year's drought. More than a dozen train carloads of hay from the upper Midwest are being delivered this month to help farmers in parts of Ohio, West Virginia, Virginia, and Pennsylvania feed their livestock. The Domestic Disaster Response group of the Lutheran Church in America is expediting the effort, the denomination said. A total of 1,500 tons of hay from Michigan will be delivered to 200 farms. More than 330 tractor-trailer loads already have been delivered to farmers in drought-stricken areas, Johanna Olson of the ELCA said. The hay has kept about 260 family farms going, she said.

Climate Change Fast Fact

(NC)—Most experts agree that average global temperatures could rise by 1 to 3.5 °C over the next century. In some regions of Canada, this could mean an increase in annual mean temperatures of between 5 and 10 degrees. Want to know more about climate change? Visit www.climatechange.gc.ca or call 1-800-OCANADA.

Looking ahead

CC Staff

Here are themes for some of our upcoming issues. We invite your contributions.

May 1 Spiritual disciplines

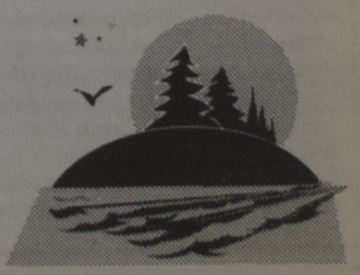
Are you "spiritual"? Is this different from simply being a Christian? What kind of "spiritual disciplines" do you practice? How important are they for the Christian life? Do you fast at special times of the year? Have you participated in spiritual retreats that have made a difference to your life?

May 15 Parenting

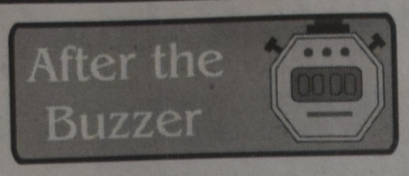
What are some of the pressures on young parents today that are hardest to deal with? Do you have some wisdom or advice to share with other parents? Do you have a story to tell about how you were brought up in contrast to how you see kids being raised today? Is it true (as John Rosemond claims) that grandma knew better?

May 29 Vacation issue

Are you part of the vacation or tourism industry and do you have some interesting stories to tell about serving others in this capacity? Reflections on the healing powers of nature? Stress on the natural environment caused by those seeking to escape?



Bad Boys



My friend Ian died on March 3. He was standing in a line-up in Duncan, B.C. and was sucker-punched in the head. He never knew what happened. After a week in a coma, he died from brain swelling. His family and friends lost an amazing human being because of an act of savagery.

I usually love boxing movies. Now when I see a guy get punched in the head, my gut churns. It's Ian all over again. I've developed an association between other people's violence and my own emotions. I actually find some violence that I see repulsive. It took the death of a friend to knock me over the head with it.

Strange response to McSorley

I was amazed at the response of the general public to Marty McSorley's hatchet job on Donald Brashear. If you didn't see it, McSorley swung his stick at Brashear's temple and dropped him unconscious with a few seconds left in a Bruins-Canucks game.

The public outrage was astonishing. Demands for McSorley's expulsion from the league flooded through the airwaves and across the desks of league officials.

McSorley actually went too far, they say. I can't believe that the public reacted so strongly, considering the huge role that glorified violence plays in entertaining people. Professional wrestling popularity is at an all-time high. Gory violence on television and in movies barely warrants a raised eyebrow anymore. Millions of people tune into shows like "Cops" to witness the thrill of four cops taking a night stick to a belligerent drunk in a back alley in Pittsburgh. Yet, the people cry out for McSorley's head. What's the deal?

When is sports violence repulsive?

I've been trying to figure out what made people react the way they did, and I finally came up with a possibility. Perhaps it was the premeditated, calculated nature of McSorley's attack that made it so repulsive. Hockey players get punched, speared, and elbowed all the time. They even get a stick in the head once in a while. Yet, these things usually happen in the heat of battle, when two players are at each other and one goes a little too far in retaliating. In McSorley's case, he clearly planned his attack and carried it out when Brashear wasn't even looking. It was cowardly.

The irony of the whole business is that people are generally tolerant of violence when it involves two mutually consenting adults who are following their emotions. What they can't tolerate is pre-meditated attacks on unsuspecting victims. It's easy to understand the outrage at such an attack, but it's harder to understand why our culture is so enamored with violence up to that point.

Maybe it's the idea that random violence without motive makes us feel vulnerable (some would argue, of course, that McSorley's lumber chop was motivated by Brashear's antagonism earlier in the game).

Some standards left

It's encouraging to see that the general public seems to have some sort of standards left when it comes to violence. For the most part, they've become desensitized to it, but they've reserved some indignation for situations where someone like McSorley crosses the line into cowardly brutality.

It's too bad, though, that it takes an incident such as this for people to stop and reflect on the violence that oozes through every orifice of our culture. Our sinful nature has promoted violence as a way to entertain, to titillate, and to enthrall. Until it offends what's left of our sensibilities or relates to our personal lives in some painful way, violence continues to proliferate as an art form.

Tim Antonides teaches Grade 8 and is a basketball coach at Surrey Christian School in Surrey, B.C.

Physicist wins Templeton Prize for religion

LONDON, England (EP) — Physicist Freeman Dyson, who has written about the relationship between science and faith, won the annual Templeton Prize for Progress in Religion March 22. The prize includes a cash grant of $940,000.

The prize was created in 1972 by mutual funds entrepreneur John M. Templeton to fill a void he felt was left by the Nobel Prizes. Past winners have included scholars who explore the link between science and religion, but have also included well-known religious figures such as Mother Teresa, Charles Colson and Billy Graham.

Dyson, a 76-year-old emeritus professor of physics at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, N.J., said he was "baffled" at his selection, explaining, "I'm not a theologian. I'm not a saint." In fact, Dyson is not a church member, although he attends a Presbyterian congregation and describes himself as a follower of Christ.

The relationship between faith and science has been only a side issue in Dyson's books. However, it has been a lifelong interest for the British-born physicist, who launched his career at age 25 by synthesizing three competing theories of quantum electrodynamics.

In remarks prepared in response to his selection, Dyson said, "Religious creationists and scientific materialists are equally dogmatic and insensitive. By their arrogance they bring both science and religion into disrepute. The media exaggerate their numbers and importance." Dyson said later that he believes scientists should "take advantage of religion to make science something we can be proud of."

Dyson's research has included the use of nuclear technology in medicine and space travel. He is the author of a number of books, including *Disturbing the Universe* (1979), *Infinite in All Directions* (1988), *Imagined Worlds* (1997) and *The Sun, the Genome and the Internet* (1999). He is known to fans of science fiction as the creator of the "Dyson sphere," an imagined construct based on the notion that a highly advanced technological civilization would ultimately completely surround its host star with a huge shell to capture 100 percent of the useful radiant energy.

The Templeton Prize will be bestowed by Britain's Prince Phillip in a private ceremony May 9. A public ceremony will be held May 16 in Washington, D.C.

This is to tell you that you were left behind

BELLFLOWER, Calif. (EP) — A California church is creating "end times" capsules for people who miss the Second Coming of Christ. Hosanna Chapel in Bellflower, Calif., is encouraging members to leave messages for those who miss the Rapture in the hope of bringing them to faith in Christ. Pastor Garry Ansdell said he got the idea from the best-selling *Left Behind* fiction series by Tim LaHaye and Jerry Jenkins. He's taping a study on the Rapture and putting it into the church's "Rapture Box" along with a copy of the first novel in the series.

FROM COAST TO COAST

English Radio:
Back to God Hour

Television:
Primary Focus

BRITISH COLUMBIA

Duncan - CKAY	10:00 am	1500
Burns Lake - CFLO	9:15 am	1400
Osoyoos - CJOR	8:00 am	1490
Penticton - CKOR	8:00 am	800
Port Alberni - CJAV	7:00 pm	1240
Prince George - CIRX	7:00 am	94.3
Princeton - CHOR	8:00 am	1400
Smithers - CFBV	9:15 am	1230
Summerland - CHOR	8:00 am	1450
Vernon - CJIB	9:30 pm	940

ALBERTA

Brooks - CIBQ	8:00 am	1340
Ft. McMurray-CJOK	8:30 am	1230
High River - CHRB	6:30 pm	1140
Edmonton - CJCA	6:00 pm	930
Westlock - CFOK	7:30 am	1370

SASKATCHEWAN

Estevan - CJSL	8:00 am	1280
Weyburn - CFSL	8:00 am	1190

MANITOBA

Altona - CFAM	9:30 am	950
Steinbach - CHSM	8:00 am	1250
Winnipeg - CKJS	9:15 am	810

ONTARIO

Atikokan - CHAK	9:30 am	1240
Chatham - CFCO	6:30 am	630
Fort Frances - CFOB	9:30 am	640
Guelph - CJOY	8:30 am	1460
Hamilton - CHAM	7:30 am	820
Kapuskasing - CKAP	7:00 am	580
Kingston - WBDR	7:30 am	102.7
London - CKSL	7:00 am	1410
Newmarket - CKDX	9:30 am	88.5
Oshawa - CKDO	8:00 am	1350
Owen Sound -CFOS	10:30 am	560
Pembroke - CHVR	10:00 am	96.7
Sarnia - CHOK	7:30 am	1070
Stratford - CJCS	8:30 am	1240
Windsor - CKLW	7:30 am	800
Wingham - CKNX	10:30 am	920

NEW BRUNSWICK

Saint John - CHSJ	9:00 am	94.1

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

Charlottetown - CFCY	7:00 am	630

NOVA SCOTIA

Digby - CKDY	6:00 am	1420
Halifax - CFDR	8:30 am	780
Kentville - CKEN	8:30 am	1490
Middleton - CKAD	8:30 am	1350
NewGlasgow -CKEC	7:30 am	1320
Weymouth - CKDY	8:30 am	103.1
Sydney - CJCB	8:00 am	1270

ALBERTA
Lethbridge - CJIL
Thursday - 9:00 pm
Saturday - 12:00 noon
ONTARIO - CTS
Tuesday - 10:00 am

Check your local listings for cable outlets airing *Primary Focus*.

Saturdays:
PACIFIC -- BC . . . . 7 pm
MOUNTAIN -- AB . . 8 pm
CENTRAL -- SK. & MB . . . . . 9 pm
EASTERN -- ON & PQ . . . . . 10 pm
ATLANTIC -- NFLD, NB, NS, & PEI . . . 11 pm

3475 Mainway
PO Box 5070
Station LCD1
Burlington, ON L7R 3Y8

THE BACK TO GOD HOUR

Faith and writing

Fifth Faith & Writing Festival attracts 1600 to Calvin College

Marian Van Til

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. – The biennial faith and writing festival held at Calvin College just keeps getting bigger. But it would be hard for it to get better. This year the festival drew 1600 participants. That limit, set by festival organizers, was reached two months before the event took place from March 30 through April 1.

The reason the festival keeps drawing bigger and bigger crowds is its overall quality – and its ability to attract "big name" writers, among them this year's keynote speakers Chaim Potok, Anne Lamott and Maya Angelou. Past keynoters have included Elie Wiesel, John Updike, Annie Dillard and Madeleine L'Engle. As that list of well-known writers has grown, it has made it easier to sign up new speakers of equal stature.

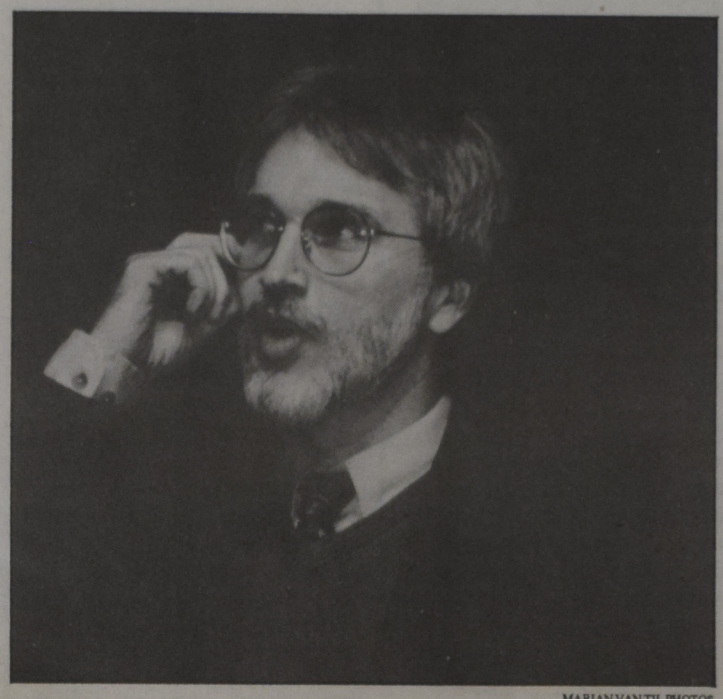
The keynote addresses, held in the Calvin Fieldhouse, are open to the public – for a ticket price of $15.00 (US) – and are generally sold out. That helps slightly to offset the festival budget, which this year was nearly $250,000. Despite that price tag, it is a "break-even event," says Dr. Dale Brown of Calvin's English department. Brown is the director of the festival.

A festival, not a conference

This writers' conference is unique in that it brings together a host of writers, publishers and readers who are all interested in how one's faith intersects with one's writing (and reading). Brown says that part of the event's uniqueness is that it is a "festival," not just a conference. And that's not just semantics.

"That's a key word for us," he told Calvin director of media relations Phil de Haan. "There's really nothing like this in the literary world. We have academics, writers, students, publishers – lots and lots of people under a very big tent. We intentionally say, 'Let's celebrate words from all kinds of directions.'"

Brown further explained: "We're interested in writers who show respect for and understanding of a faith tradition [which may include Jewish traditions, not only Christian traditions]. Some of them may, in fact, have left that tradition, but they're still reacting to it, they're aware of it and they're respectful of it. I guess we're somewhere between the easy-answer Christian literature and the writing that pays no mind to the role of faith in one's life. It's not an easy place to be, but it's where we at Calvin feel we should be."



MARIAN VAN TIL PHOTOS

Dr. Dale Brown, of Calvin College's English Department, the main organizer of the Faith & Writing Festival.

Brown has written a book called *Of Fiction and Faith*, which contains a series of interviews with well-known authors whose fiction is clearly faith-based, though not all of whom are Christian.

Something for everyone

The festival contains something for virtually everyone. Superbly organized, in addition to the evening keynote addresses, the festival's two-and-a-half days are filled with readings by and interviews with well-known writers, with workshops on such topics as "writing the vivid essay" or "revising short fiction," and with "concurrent sessions" in five categories: Writers, Children's, Publishing, Reading and Film. There is also plenty of time for fellowship and "networking"; there's musical entertainment, and, this year, the showing of films by screenwriter/director Paul Schrader, who was an interviewee during the festival (see accompanying story).

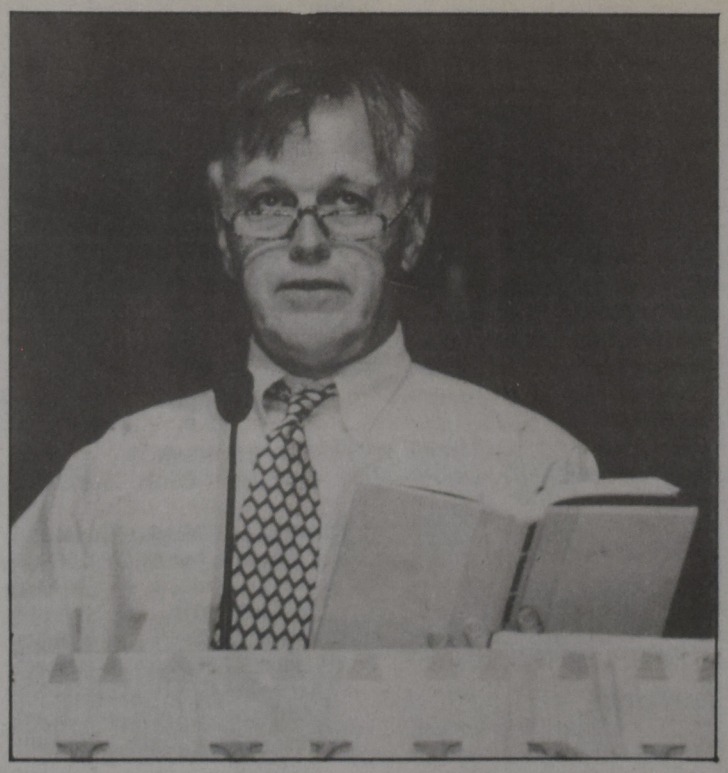
Introducing ... Clyde Edgerton

Marian Van Til

Clyde Edgerton has been around for a while, but he's a Christian writer with whom many Canadians may not be familiar. His milieu is the American South among small-town Christian fundamentalists such as the Free Will Baptists. He grew up among such people and has left them behind (he is now an Episcopalian). But perhaps he hasn't, because he deeply mines that world for delightful, poignant, annoying or offbeat characters, and for the faith they exhibit, however skewed it sometimes is. He has keen, sometimes sardonic insight into their world and their faith. But he views them kindly, for the most part, and he wants us to.

'A master storyteller'

The New York Times Book Review has called Edgerton "a master storyteller ... who is in full command of his craft no matter what the setting." He is that; and he's also extremely funny (some have likened his humor to Mark Twain's, a heady compliment). Edgerton's public readings, besides opening a new world to most listeners/readers outside the South, are simply a great deal of fun – and his North Carolina accent makes his characters (some of whom speak in dialect) come alive as few other public readings could.



Clyde Edgerton

Along with his writing and story-telling skills he is an excellent musician. His readings often include a few numbers which he sings (his own or others' songs), expertly accompanying himself on piano or guitar.

If you've never encountered Clyde Edgerton, I recommend a rendezvous. Below is a list of his books. They are all published by Algonquin Books and by Ballantine, and are available at many bookstores and via the Internet.

***Raney* (1986).**

The story of the first two years, two months and two days of a modern southern marriage. Raney is a Free Will Baptist; Charles an Episcopalian. Can their clashing worlds be brought into harmony? Well, it's going to take some doing....

***The Floatplane Notebooks* (1989).**

This is a chronicle of the history of the Copeland family of North Carolina from before the American Civil War to after Vietnam. It's been called a "whimsical, utterly original, ultimately brilliant novel of small-town North Carolina and Vietnam" by the *Los Angeles Times*.

***Walking Across Egypt* (1988).**

The poignant story of a spunky old lady and her faith, a stray dog, a hungry teenaged orphan/reform school resident and the best home-cooking in Hansen County, North Carolina. This has recently been made into a movie which should now be available in video stores.

***Killer Diller* (1992).**

Back in Hansen County, that no-longer-teenaged orphan and reform school resident, Wesley Benfield, is still working at reforming himself in the eyes of the Lord and of that spunky old lady, Mattie Rigsbee.

***In Memory of Junior* (1994).**

An offbeat, humorous story of 21 North Carolinians, covering about two weeks when a whole passel of their relatives waited to see who would die first. But there were too many graves and not enough gravestones to go around, so one of those old people is going to have to do some passing down instead of passing on.

***Redeye: A Western* (1996).**

Edgerton admitted he became fascinated with the Western landscape on a trip West. He shifts this story to the pueblo country of Colorado, but doesn't leave faith communities behind; he transmogrifies them into Mormons and Quakers.

***Where Trouble Sleeps* (1998).**

Edgerton returns to North Carolina, circa 1950, to Raney's hometown of Listre. This is the story of what happens when a stranger passing through decides to spend a few days there.

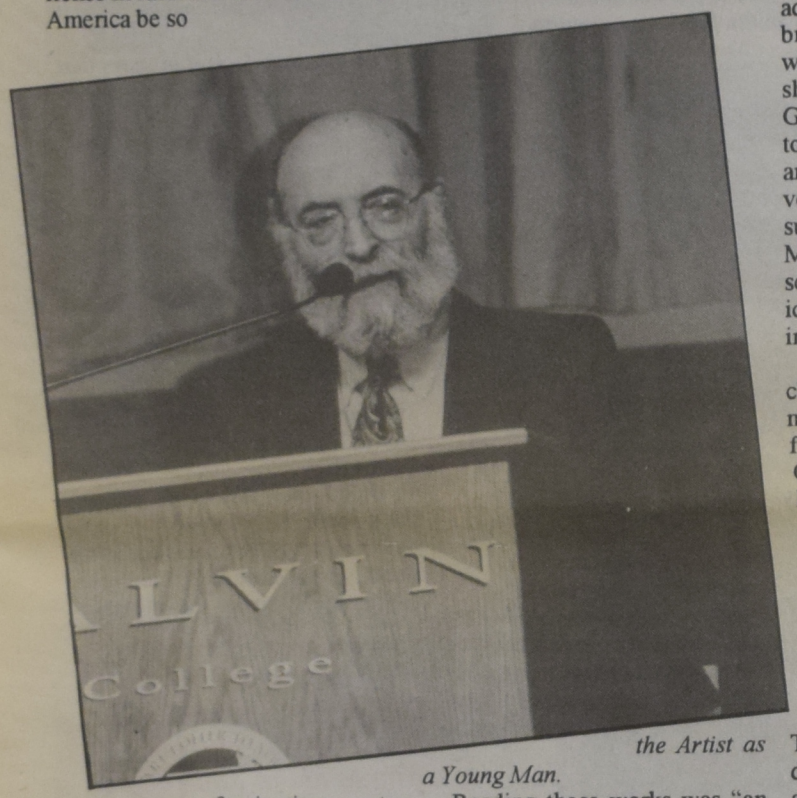
Faith and writing

Chaim Potok: Defender of 'deviant truth'

Marian Van Til

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. – There's something about the novels of rabbi Chaim Potok, both immersed in and set apart from what he calls a fundamentalist Jewish tradition in the heart of New York City, which strikes chords with Reformed Christian readers.

Why should an urban Jewish religious, ethnic and social tradition so different from the experience of the largely Dutch, Reformed experience in rural and suburban North America be so fascinating to those Reformed Christians? Or to any Christians? Because there are enough similarities between strict faith communities, Christian or not, for a good writer to be able to draw out the experience of growing up or living in such a community, making the experience seem universal.



the Artist as a Young Man.

Potok, a rabbi by training, is an important Scripture translator and commentator among Jews. Nevertheless, he sees his main vocation as novel-writing, a course he embarked on while still a teenager. He has written, among others, *The Chosen, The Promise, My Name is Asher Lev, The Gift of Asher Lev, Davita's Harp.*

'A very religious home'

"I grew up in a very, very religious home," he says. He had artistic talent, but "art was a Gentile enterprise," according to his austere father. Reading, of course, was not left to the Gentiles (though writing, except as it pertained to the Jewish Scriptures, was also a questionable activity). But the Jewish "canon" of allowable literature stopped at 1900. "No one wanted to tackle James Joyce."

Young as he was, Potok wasn't content with that. Through reading two particular novels as an adolescent, his life changed. He was looking for "a sophisticated adult novel" in his local library. The librarian, who had been following his reading for some time, approved his choices: Evelyn Waugh's *Brideshead Revisited* and Joyce's *A Portrait of*

Chance, with or without meaning

It should be noted that in describing events in his life Potok uses the word *chance* many times, and in a way which seems a little surprising, given his belief in God's ordering of the universe. And in a way which will leave many of us who are Reformed feeling uneasy.

Potok does not see God ordering the minute day-to-day affairs of our lives. He sees all those things as "chance" at work – or perhaps at play. But "chance" which one sees as part of a chaotic, meaningless universe is entirely different than "chance" which occurs within an ordered, meaningful universe, Potok says. And it is the latter which he feels he has experienced in abundance (and which most *Christian Courier* readers would see as Providence and not chance at all).

It was largely his reading, Potok admits, that set him "on a mad break with my closed Jewish world." He discovered, to his shock, that there were not just Gentile writers, but Jewish writers too, of whom he had never heard and who were banned from his very orthodox community. One such "keeper of deviant truth" was Milton Steinberg, who Potok describes as having written "a significant novel and some other important works."

One day, upon emerging from a classroom and a session in Talmud, Potok overheard two men from his class talking in Yiddish. One said: "Milton Steinberg died last night. Now they are punishing him for his books."

"I couldn't figure this out," says Potok "I couldn't find Milton Steinberg in the card catalog." So he asked the librarian about it.

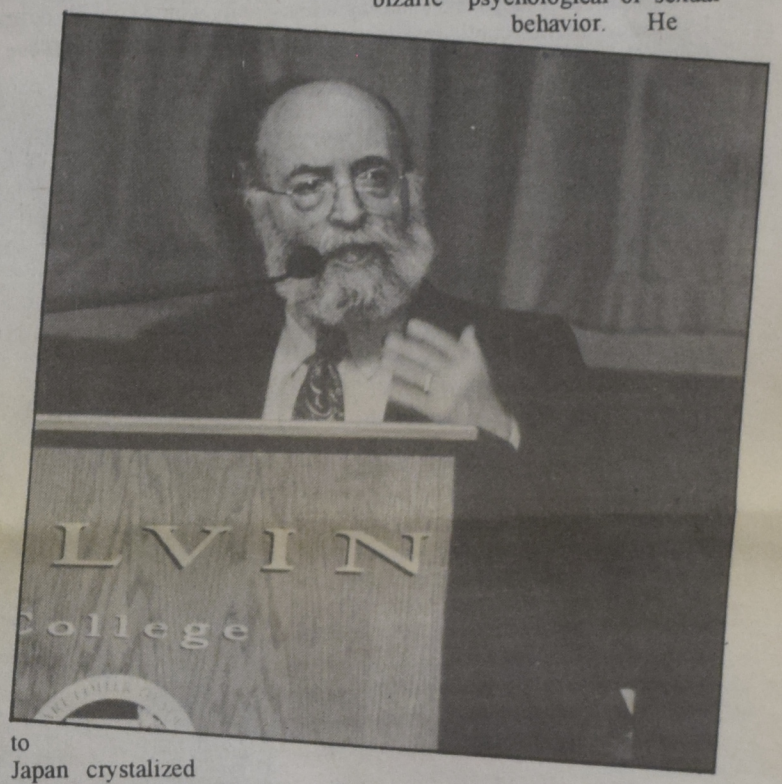
"His books we don't have here," was the answer. The way that was spoken was as "a damnable locution meaning: they are off the shelves," Potok explains. "I backed away. I couldn't figure out what was going on. And that's when chance intervened again."

Potok, who was now attending a Jewish seminary – for the good education it afforded, not because he wanted to follow the life his father wished for him – had a cousin who lived near the seminary. That cousin "had a shelf-full of Milton Steinberg" – which Potok soon devoured.

Utter transformation

The seminary was a "non-fundamentalist version of the Yashiva" he had attended earlier under his father's guidance which "teaches Jewish subjects in a Western, scientific mode: Bible, Hebrew literature, poetry, medieval and ancient." A whole range of Jewish works suddenly opened to him. "I learned honesty toward the tradition," he says. "It was opened up, laid bare so we could look at it. Then I knew that I would use my Judaism as fodder for my writing [but] I didn't know what or where."

In the seminary one had to do a stint as a chaplain. That meant Potok had to join the armed forces, and through another "chance" episode was sent to Korea (this, during the Korean War). His war experience had a startling impact. "After I was done with Korea nothing that was fundamental to my life mattered any more because I had been utterly transformed," he explains. Two incidents on a visit to Japan crystalized that. First, he described a walk through Kyoto, a temple city. "For the first time in my life, in this citadel of paganism, I felt no anti-Semitism. I was merely a white face; a Yankee. Ironically enough, it is Deuteronomy that tells me to hate the pagans, but the pagans I was supposed to hate were not treating me badly."



Then he described watching an old man pray with great intensity to a Shinto goddess. It reminded him of the old men he saw in the synagogue at home. "What am I watching here?" he asked himself. "Does the God to whom I pray listen to *this* old man's prayer? If he doesn't, does he *ever* listen to prayer? And if he does listen to this man's prayer, then what are Judaism and Christianity all about?" Potok never satisfactorily answered those questions for himself but felt they were very important questions.

"I saw suffering in Korea the like of which I could not imagine," he says. He figured he knew why the Jews were to suffer (his father would say, "We are 'The Other,' and the world persecutes The Other) but why should Koreans suffer?

"This all turned my neat Jewish American, Western model completely upside down," asserts Potok. "It relativized my world. Nothing has been the same again."

But "my writing tries to make sense of my world," says Potok. His characters such as Asher Lev, "were up against reality," but they never saw that. "They were caught up in the deviant part of reality." By "deviant" Potok does not mean bizarre psychological or sexual behavior. He means deviating from the norm in one's religious community, from the expected thinking and behavior that such a community requires.

"They [his characters, and perhaps he himself] were caught up in two worlds, one that doesn't quite fit, but that they want to make fit with their other [first] world. There's the chance, the choice, the transformation, the coping with the transformation, the deviant, the attack on it, the attempting to present the deviant from within the tradition."

That's what the writing of many of the authors featured at the faith and writing festival does.

Potok quoted James Joyce: "'If I can get to the heart of Dublin, I can get to the heart of any city in the world.' In the particular is the universal. You sense this as a reader. Somewhere around page 40 or 50 you leave the story's peculiarities and insert your own."

Easter

Mourning to dancing

James C. Schaap

There's a story in the nubbins emerging from the stones along the west side of our barn.

Mharkiha stoops over a gray pool of stagnant water. A tan scum froth flits across the surface, as if alive and deadly. Ammal is beside her, watching his mother rub his clothes between her fingers. She pulls the shirt from the water, then stands. Ammal crowds her. In the foothills dust billows from a column of trucks.

The war never stops, the bombing relentless, the destruction continuing even when it seems there is nothing left to be destroyed. At night, thick clouds of oil smoke stanch the stars; by day, it turns the sun dusty, wafer-thin.

There is no money, there is no law, there is no town, there is no government.

All there is is war.

Ammal puts his hand on her shoulder. The trucks rumble closer. She stoops for more wash, feels him drape himself over her because he believes she can protect him.

Months have passed since she heard from her husband. He left, like so many at the beginning, when the army came and took the men. At first, there was a letter. Ten letters in all. One page. "We are here and you are there. Pray that one day I will be with you again."

Everyday, people die. Men are shot dead on the street. Skeletons seep into the dust.

Then the letters stopped. More than a year ago.

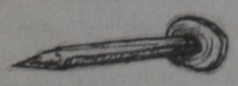
She knows there is no food, no clean water, no oil, no power. Only madness.

Everyday, people die. Men are shot dead on the street. Skeletons seep into the dust.

The trucks come closer, enveloped in their cloud of desert dust, roll along effortlessly, as if they alone are healthy.

She stands, hides her son in her long skirt.

War – its chaos, its madness – is a certain kind of hell.



For months, no one in Barry's carpool spoke when they'd pass the intersection where his wife was killed. But then, slowly, the jabber started again, as if their being able to talk at that spot was itself their considered opinion about how long he should keep grieving.

The corner where it happened has changed almost completely. A strip mall fills the northwest corner – a camera store, a sub shop, fashions for BIG MEN.

When Nancy was killed, the posts of an old barbed wire fence leaned in a half dozen awkward directions through the ditch. Not today.

Barry's nights are long and painful without her, but he's never acclimated himself to weekends alone. In a few years the kids will be gone. The only thing that hasn't changed, he thinks, is the cottonwood, a monster the city would not take down – some ordinance, something about trees.

On its trunk, a gash maybe two feet high is painted black.

He remembers hearing how it happened from a young cop with a thin mustache, who bit his lip as he was talking.

Everything at the intersection where Nancy died has changed, except the tree.

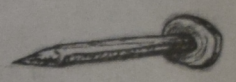
Now Ed and Tony plan a fishing trip, talk about their wives, complain about somebody at work, jabber about weather.

Everything's changed at home, too. There's a ghost standing at the kitchen sink, and in the front room, where the two of them would watch the news together and maybe something else. In the bedroom closet, too, where her clothes haven't moved. In front of the mirror in the bathroom he still sees her every morning, leaning over slightly to put on eyeliner. Her robe slightly gaped at her neck.

Nobody ever slapped a swath of tree tar on him, nobody ever covered his wounds to keep happiness from spilling out of the gash death opened so unmercifully in him. Now when Ed and Tony jabber, he tells himself that somebody ought to drop that cottonwood once and for all.

Cut it down – ordinance or no ordinance. Cut it down. Everything has changed. Cut it down.

In this world, grief in scars that won't heal is the closest some of us will ever come to hell.



COURTESY GEORGE LANGBROEK

Crucifix — *nail sculpture by George Langbroek (constructed with more than 10,000 nails).*

Peggy never had nice fingernails, but now a spider web of lines spread over the back of her hands and stretch over her swollen knuckles. Her veins protrude. Her hands seem to belong to her mother.

Bruce has slow-pitch again. He's good. He's so good. Everybody says it. When sometimes she packs up the kids and takes them along, she'll sit in the bleachers

How do you tell the Lord that you don't really want this baby, the one nobody knows about and should never have come?

with the other young mothers, and someone will say to her, "Peggy, Bruce is so good. Did you see that throw?" Right then Erin will be eating sand from behind the dugout or Todd will have banged his head. Maybe the baby will be bawling.

She sees her reflection in the front window of the trailer, and she can't stand her hair. She never knows exactly how she wants it cut, but when she sees herself like this, at night, alone, she thinks she looks so awful, that it would take a miracle for anyone to remember way back when she wasn't bad looking, wasn't always worn and beat.

The kids are finally in bed. She's too tired to do anything. Where would she get the strength to stack shelves or work checkout if right now she can hardly get herself up from the table? If she worked nights, what would she be like during the day? Who would want her?

All her mother ever says is get a hold of yourself, Peggy. My word, girl, you don't know what work is,

not with all the appliances you got today. My word, girl, what's wrong? You got such a good husband.

She tries to pray about it, but she doesn't know what to say because she thinks the Lord doesn't want to deal with her prattle. How do you tell the Lord that you don't really want this baby, the one nobody knows about and should never have come?

Bruce calls to tell her that he's stopping at Jerry's and not to wait up because they've

The very worst of our experiences we analogize to hell – guilt, despair, grief, the chaos of war.

got some stuff at work to talk about. She puts down the phone and tries to hold her face together. She was going to tell him tonight.

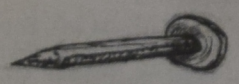
She could still get rid of it. He'd never know. Bring the kids to Mom, tell her she needed to shop for school. Nobody would ever know.

Kill a child, she thinks. Kill a baby.

Or kill me, she thinks.

She folds her hands, looks up at the ceiling, but knows she can't ask God for an answer to a problem that God doesn't think is a problem.

When the only emotion we find to cover what we see in the mirror is our own gray despair, that painful razor-sharp hopelessness must be something, really, of hell.



At least Randy has a job. It's not a good one, but at least it's a job.

The state found it for him, had it the moment he got out of prison. He wears a white apron, pulls it on over the work clothes he keeps in a locker that stands beside all the others. Every morning they get one. By afternoon it's full of blood. A conveyer belt wide as a table carries big chunks of beef past a dozen cutters on the line who come and go. Nobody likes the job. Every week it's somebody new down the belt, you know?

Grab the meat, tug, slap the blade in, and slash. Keep the knife sharp or it's twice the work. Let the blade do the work, guy — that's what they say. By buzzer time, your wrists hurt. Blood all over – on your hands and on that clean white apron. That's why they all wear boots.

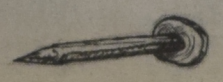
But that's not the blood that gets to him. The blood that gets him is the blood that isn't there except in his mind. Sometimes he wonders if he will ever be able to pass that intersection without thinking of her. When he's at the bridge a half mile away, he already hears the sound.

But he doesn't even remember it happening – he was *that* out of it, *that* drunk. What he remembers is the clear and unmistakable, throaty sound of someone dying, a sound he'd never heard before, but a sound he recognized as if he'd heard it all his life long.

Everyday they start with perfectly clean aprons, but everyday it's bloody when they're finished. How on earth do they get out that terrible stain, he wonders.

"Nancy Thompson," he thinks. He'll never forget her name, the only human being he ever held in his arms and watched die.

Guilt so incredibly heavy must be at least something like hell.



I'm not sure what hell is. For hundreds of years, Christians hazarded guesses because they might have thought they knew. They painted its vivid, ritual tortures before a backdrop of black fire that scorched and ravaged human flesh but never quite consumed it.

When John Milton's Satan falls from heaven, he finds himself afloat in a fiery furnace of murk, a nether world that might look like an eerie glowing sea of burning oil:

"At once as far as Angels kenn he views
The dismal situation waste and wild,
A dungeon horrible, on all sides round
As one great furnace flamed, yet from those flames
No light, but rather darkness visible
Served only to discover sights of woe,
Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace
And rest can never dwell, hope never comes
That comes to all; but torture without end
Still urges, and a fiery deluge, fed
With ever-burning sulphur unconsum'd."

Maybe Milton knew what hell was like, but I'm not so sure. Mine is a modern mind.

There's wailing in hell, we're told, and gnashing of teeth. There's screaming and scourges, pestilence and blackness.

Really, what do we know of hell?

Mharkiha's world is in shambles. Her husband is long gone, her child threatened by sickness, starvation, and violence. War, she thinks, is at least something of hell.

Randy is shackled by a willful act whose consequence took the life of an innocent woman. He knows the weight of his guilt must be something of hell.

Barry cannot gather the strength required to start a new life, tortured as he is with the ghosts of a joy that is gone. His grief seems to him a kind of hell.

Peggy knows abortion is wrong. But she has no hope; all she knows is despair. Her depression is fed on hopelessness she recognizes as something of hell.

The very worst of our experiences we analogize to hell – guilt, despair, grief, the chaos of war. All we really know of hell is our most complete separation from love, from God.

And yet we use the word flippantly, as if by tossing it out like a gum wrapper we ward off our fears. "Go to hell," we say in anger. "The hell with it," we say, throwing down a pencil. "Aw, hell," we mutter, as if nothing really matters.

We invest the torture of what hell might be on pinched fingers and stubbed toes, on frustrating co-workers, and even unanticipated surprise – "What the hell?" we say. *Hell* may be, for our time, the ultimate superlative.

Whatever it is, we know very well it's worse than a split fingernail. Hell, the place, is at least the very worst of our aggravations, the deepest and most significant of our sorrows, our most horrendous sadness.

It is *at least* our grief at the loss of a loved one; *at least* our sense of chaotic madness in a life without tomorrows; *at least* our guilt, human blood staining our hands; *at least* the deepest of our hopelessness. At a minimum – at the very minimum – hell is our worst fears, just as, at a minimum, a hundred years is our fullest sense of eternity.

Today we don't see hell as vividly as did the macabre dreamers of the Middle Ages. We don't picture a place where blasphemers are lynched by their tongues; where adulterous women dangle over blackish fire, hung by their hair; where their accomplices are hung by the feet so their faces dangle in filth; where murderers, confined to grave-like boxes, become eternal cuisine for worms and vermin; where usurers slump in a swamp of pus and blood; where children who disobeyed their parents are pecked continuously by freakish, long-necked birds.

To moderns such as ourselves, such images seem bizarre fantasies of minds demented from excessive repression, even if we recognize those images as having been drawn from very real human fears.

On a day long ago, a day we celebrate reverently this week, Jesus Christ shed something of his earthly coil to spend some time somewhere none of us have ever

traveled, but all of us imagine best in our own worst experiences.

On a day long ago, a day we remember on Good Friday, Jesus Christ took on the very worst of our terrors and saved us from the very worst of our fears. He went to hell for us, whatever profound or phantasmagoric horror that is. Jesus Christ suffered, for us – at a minimum! – the very worst we can suffer or even imagine.

Today we don't see hell as vividly as did the macabre dreamers of the Middle Ages. To moderns such as ourselves, such images seem bizarre fantasies of minds demented from excessive repression.

And then he arose. And then he broke through every last shroud of death itself, every last shred of the terror triggered in our darkest moments. Divine devotion exploded out from the very worst of our horrors, as if the massive weight of all our sin were the thinnest tendrils of a spider's web.

Outside our barn, weeds are just beginning to emerge from the stones along the foundation, from the stones I laid there to keep them down. No matter how often I cut them out during the summer, pull them by the roots with my hands, spray them with whatever evil I can buy from the store, they come back. They always come back. No matter how hot the summer, they live again. No matter how cold the winter, they arise.

For how ever many hours you want to count, Jesus Christ was buried in, at best, our worst nightmares. But like the green that now surfaces again, he arose from whatever it was he suffered, and he's there eternally.

That's the story of Easter. It's written out at the foundation of our barn, and from the base of our despair. It's imaged in our tulips and our dandelions. Once and for all, Christ arose from behind the stones of our darkness.

Jesus Christ arose. That's the story. That's what he did – for us, once and for all.

Hallelujah. What a Savior.

James Schaap teaches English and writing at Dordt College, in Sioux Center, Iowa, and is the author of many short stories, a novel, and several collections of essays and meditations.

Short story

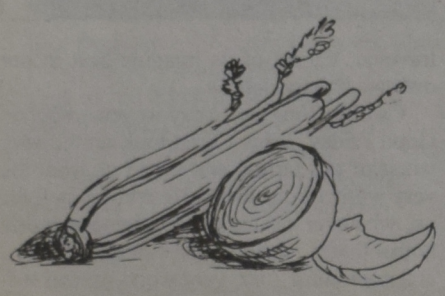
Sophia's Lifeline

Sonya VanderVeen Feddema

In the produce section of Hampson Food Mart Sophia squeezed a crisp head of lettuce.

"Stop that, girl!"

Startled, Sophia turned to see her next door neighbor Rose. Just the person I need to talk to, Sophia thought.



"They bruise!" Rose warned. "Like people do when others pry into their affairs. I always say, mind your own business!"

Sophia gasped. Did Rose read my mind? she wondered. Is she warning me not to ask about her secret? Sophia stared past Rose at piles of yellow bananas and red peppers, avoiding the old woman's quelling glance.

"Don't be like Viola!" Rose snapped. "She always snoops into my concerns."

"Oh," Sophia stammered. "Ahhhhh... got to go." She paid for the lettuce and hurried home past Donna's Donuts on Main Street. Four weeks ago, on Good Friday, her friend Becky had been killed there by a careening car. Sophia had watched, horrified, as Becky's lifeless body lay on a rusty manhole cover.

Ten years old is too young to die! Sophia lamented. I won't die young! I'll discover Rose's secret and be a death-defier like her!

Sophia contemplated Rose. Like a warm March day with a storm on its heels, she could be petulant or pleasant, cantankerous or compassionate, on a whim it seemed. A chronic coffee-kletzer who lived with her daughter Viola, she visited whomever she pleased in the village of Hampson, calling each day on Sophia's mama.

Sophia remembered why some folks nicknamed the old woman Resurrection Rose. Like any Presbyterian, Rose believed Jesus resurrected from death. But that wasn't the reason for the nickname. Rose's many close encounters with death had earned her the title. Sophia had often listened to Rose's harrowing stories. Always they had seemed boring and meaningless. But since Becky's death they were a lifeline.

At home, Mama asked, "Got the carrots?"

"Oh, no!" Sophia winced. She placed the lettuce on the counter beside the pungent, chopped onions and celery which Mama had prepared for soup.

"It's OK," Mama said. "I'll run over to Viola's now and ask her for some."

Sophia poured a glass of milk and sat down remembering that Becky had often joined her for a snack. She pushed aside the glass and rested her head on the table.

Returning with carrots, Mama said, "Rose is coming here for a few days."

"She is?" Sophia sat up. "Great!"

"Great? I thought her constant visits annoyed you."

"Sometimes. When is she coming?"

"Friday evening till Sunday. Viola needs a break from her."

"Two whole days!"

Mama threw Sophia a curious glance, then scraped four carrots.

"We're here!" Viola announced.

"Hi," Mama said. "Sophia, take Rose's suitcase to your bedroom."

As Sophia grabbed the tattered suitcase, Viola asked Mama, "May I talk to you privately?"

In her bedroom, Sophia threw the suitcase on the bed. The dented clasp unlocked and the contents burst out. A key clattered on the floor. Sophia put the clothes back inside the suitcase and placed the key on top.

Returning to the kitchen, she passed the living room. Viola fretted loudly, "Yesterday Mother received a letter. I opened it and read: 'The time and place we decided on are still suitable. L.B' When I gave it to Mother...of course, I glued it shut ... she opened it, and said, 'Good!' Now what could that mean?"

"I don't know."

"Another thing," Viola continued, "I told her to give up her license. She refused. Tuesday she backed into the birch tree again."

"Take the key," Mama suggested.

"I did. I hid it in my jewelry box. But now it's gone."

The key in the suitcase! Sophia thought. Rose has two secrets! Sophia bounded to her bedroom, grabbed the car key, and thrust it into her pocket. Just to keep Rose here till I find out how she defies death, Sophia decided.

"Are they still talking about me?" Rose asked as Sophia came into the kitchen. "I hate cooking for myself. That's the only reason I came here. Viola wants me watched all the time just because I'm seventy-nine. And she thinks she knows me completely. If she only knew the truth!"

"They're coming!" Sophia warned, wondering what truth Rose meant. Did it have anything to do with the mysterious note?

After Viola left, Mama served coffee. At ten o'clock Rose yawned and went to bed.

In the sunny kitchen Rose leaned over her bacon and eggs like a menacing bird of prey.

"What's wrong?" Mama inquired. "Was the bed uncomfortable?"

"It was fine! I won't discuss what's bothering me! If you ask me, life would be easier if people minded their own business."

Mind your own business, Sophia sang silently. Is that the only song she knows? Sophia surreptitiously smoothed the key in her pocket.

Papa grinned. "I always mind my own business. Right, Sophia?"

"Sure," Sophia laughed.

Papa pushed his plate aside. "Time to go!" He kissed Mama and Sophia, then left.

The phone rang. "Hello," Mama answered. "No. I can't come today." She paused. "I forgot. Wait, I'll ask Sophia."

Mama covered the receiver and sighed. "I promised Sarah I'd help her with the triplets today. Will you be all right if I go?"

"Of course, she will!" Rose said.

If Mama leaves, Sophia worried, I'll have to listen to Mind-Your-Own-Business sermons. But if Mama stays, I might not have a chance to ask Rose about her secret.

"What do you think?" Mama asked.

"Go," Sophia decided.

"I'll be there in an hour," Mama said into the receiver, then hung up.

Rose smiled, compassion unexpectedly sprouting up in her like spring crocuses through the winter of her cranky mood.

"Leave now!" she insisted. "Those babies need lots of loving."

"All right. I'll be back around supper time."

After Mama left, Sophia wiped egg yolk off her plate with a piece of toast, then ate it. She fingered the key. Soon! she thought. Soon I'll know!

Rose pushed back her chair and stood up. She started to carry her plate to the counter.

Now! Sophia decided.

"What?"

"What is your secret?"

Rose's plate crashed on the floor. "Nosy child! Remember what I said about bruising people?" She stumbled out of the kitchen.

Sophia fetched the broom and dustpan from the closet. She swept the broken plate into the dustpan and threw it into the empty garbage

ILLUSTRATIONS BY HARRY DER NEDERLANDEN

can. Thud! Thud! Like dirt striking Becky's coffin, she thought and shuddered.

Suddenly, Sophia heard Rose's anxious voice. She tiptoed to the living room door and listened.

"I can't come. Viola took my car key. Yes, I have the wedding ring."

The wedding ring? Sophia gasped. She's getting married! And she can't get to the wedding! So that's what she meant about Viola knowing the truth! What have I done?

Sophia stepped into the living room. "Rose," she whispered.

"Just a moment," Rose said into the receiver. She glared at Sophia. "What?"

"You said something about a key. Is this it?" She handed Rose the key.

"Yes!" Rose exclaimed, then spoke into the phone. "Someone found my key! I'll be there. Eleven o'clock. Bye." She hung up.

"Sweet child," Rose beamed. She stood up and tottered to the bedroom. Minutes later she returned with her purse and said, "I'm going home for a few hours."

Sophia crept outside and hid behind the shrubs that separated her house from Viola's. She watched as Rose started her car. Sophia gasped as it reversed like an undecided insect, moving in fits and starts, and skimmed the birch tree. Rose drove ahead, then steered clear of the tree. Finally, she sped away.

"Come back safely to me," Sophia pleaded.

Sophia set the supper table, picking at her anxious thoughts like petals on a daisy: she'll be back! she won't be back! she'll be back! she won't be back! A sound startled her. She turned around. "You're back!" she exclaimed.

"Of course," Rose smiled. "What did you expect?"

I thought you eloped, Sophia mused. But she said, "Nothing."

Rose hung her jacket over the chair. "Oh, no!" she gasped, looking at the plates on the table.

"Do you have a glue gun?"

"Yes."

"Quick! Get it!"

When Sophia returned with the glue gun, Rose was scrounging in the garbage can. She slowly straightened up, holding the pieces of the plate. "We'll fix it," she said, "because this was one of your mother's good plates."

"Sure," Sophia agreed, as she plugged in the glue gun.

Rose set the pieces on the table and sat down, then looked earnestly at Sophia. "I'm sorry I yelled at you earlier."

"It's OK," Sophia murmured, sitting beside her.

"The secret's out," Rose confided, "and I'm so relieved."

"It is?"

"Yes," Rose said. "I'll tell you about it while we work. Let's get started. I'll glue. You hold the pieces."

Sophia placed two large segments together and Rose shakily applied a bumpy layer of glue.

"How old are you?" Rose asked as they waited for the glue to dry.

"Ten."

"The age I was the year of the fire. Then you know how fear can live and grow in a young girl's heart."

"Yes," Sophia whispered, surprised.

"Molly McCann was my friend Lena's grandmother," Rose began. "After her husband died she cared for their farm until the day...," Rose paused.

She set down the glue gun and picked up a jagged, triangular piece of plate. "That belongs here," Rose said as she fit it with the other pieces.

She continued, "One day I took forbidden matches to Bubbler Creek behind Molly's farmhouse. There was lots of kindling and driftwood along the creek. I built a huge fire which seemed to lick the sky. I lost track of time. Finally, I realized how low the sun was. Without dousing the fire, I ran home."

What piece of her life is Rose revealing to me? Sophia mused.

Rose surveyed the plate. "We're doing a fine job. Just two pieces left. Add this one next."

"That night," Rose resumed, "there were incredibly high winds. Next morning Mama told me about Molly's house. Burned to the ground with Molly in it. Dead. Only the barn and animals at the far end of the property were saved when someone noticed the fire. I knew I was to blame. But I didn't tell anyone.

"Early the next morning I went to Molly's house. I threw up when I saw the charred remains. For a long time I lay crying on the ground.

"Then I went to the barn. Inside I breathed the peace I'd always felt when I'd played there with Lena. Then I saw it. Molly's wedding ring. She always left it on the window ledge while she worked. On the inside of the band I read: Molly and Ned July 10, 1872. I took the ring. And never, in all these years, have I told anyone. Until today."

Rose set the last piece in place and applied glue. Sophia cradled the plate and watched Rose's peaceful face.

"A few weeks ago, I saw Lena at First Presbyterian's Bazaar," Rose explained. "She lived out West for years. Now she lives nearby. I knew what I had to do. I phoned her the next day and told her I had her grandmother's wedding ring. Today I gave it to her. I told her what I did and asked forgiveness. She forgave me."

Sophia said urgently, "But that's not the secret I meant."

"It isn't? Which secret do you mean?"

"How you've kept from dying. When you fell off the barn roof, in your car accident, when you had cancer, when the canoe tipped over...."

"God's grace," Rose interrupted. "I didn't do anything to deserve it. Why do you ask?"

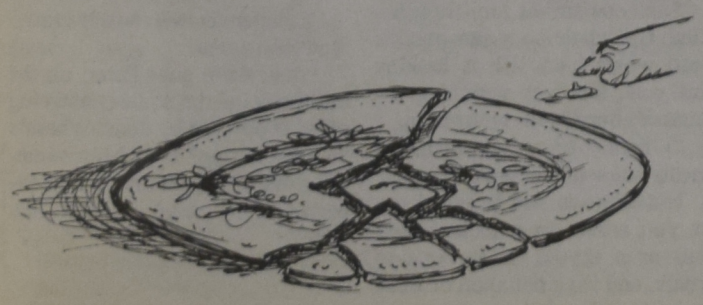
"Becky... I'm afraid to die young like she did."

"It's not our choice. Only God knows how long we'll live."

"Then there is no secret to keeping death away for awhile?"

"God gives life," Rose said. "He takes it away. But he gives eternal life. You know that, child."

Rose put down the glue gun and took the reconstructed plate from Sophia. "What do you think of it?"



Sophia examined the plate. Marred. Cracked. Held together by glue. "It's still beautiful," she said. Suddenly, she understood. Like Rose's life with its broken pieces. Molly's death. The stolen ring. The revealed secret. Forgiveness. And like my life with its broken pieces. Becky's death. My fear of dying young. Rose's explanation and reassurance. Pieces glued together with God's love and grace. "Still beautiful," she repeated.

At supper time Mama said, "Rose, you're quiet."

"I'm tired," she answered. "But happy."

"What would you like for dessert?" Papa asked. "Banana splits?"

"Yes!" Rose exclaimed.

"We're out of ice cream," Mama said.

"I'll run to the store," Sophia offered. "We'll have dessert later."

After Mama prayed, Sophia left. She walked past Donna's Donuts on the way to Hampson Food Mart. A public works truck stood in front of the shop. Sophia strode past expecting to see the rusty manhole cover in its place, solid and unyielding. But it lay on the road, like a rolled-away stone, and two men in neon-Xed construction vests, like dutiful angels, hovered by the gaping hole.

Sonya VanderVeen Feddema is an award-winning short story writer who lives in St. Catharines, Ont.

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On the shadows

Harry der Nederlanden

A riveting drama is playing itself out in front of us. It is a well-lit scene complete with all the important characters: the high priest and a crowd of his cronies, phalanxes of Pharisees, bevies of bureaucrats, accusers and witnesses. You can see them leaping up, gesturing and milling about. Their lips move and their faces swell with anger, but from where we stand we cannot make out the words.

There's an ebb and flow of violence among those crowded into the courtyard, bravado mixed with a lust for destruction like sailors caught in a storm.

In the centre stands the Accused, almost mute, in a space of his own. Around this still centre rages the trial, a mock trial really. Nonetheless, the stakes are high – life or death.

The accusers are over-acting, over-dramatizing their roles, aware of their own importance. They are important, powerful men in Jerusalem and in the nation. What they decide will determine the fate of this man, this pitiful specimen of a man who plays his part so colorlessly and inadequately.

We watch the progress of the trial from the shadows of the courtyard. Sometimes the actors are framed by a window, sometimes by a door. For a while the view is partially blocked by other spectators, but we're afraid to approach too close, afraid we'll draw attention to ourselves.

We turn away, following the proceedings out of the corner of our eyes, feeling more than seeing what is happening. A slap echoes into the courtyard. A clamor of voices. There's an ebb and flow of violence among those crowded into the courtyard, bravado mixed with a lust for destruction like sailors caught in a storm.

Crowds are such a puzzle and a mystery. Just weeks ago these same people had been welcoming, intoxicated with excitement and hope. A festival of waving hands, palm branches, scarves, cloaks flying through the air like banners. Now they are baying at the smell of blood.

✣✣✣

It is in these shadows, mixed with the crowd, that the drama of Peter's denial is played out. Over there – on a stage well-lit so that all may see – the central drama of human history is being enacted. Although the officials strut about, full of their own importance, although they swing their arms and raise their voices, they are playing roles more important than they themselves know. Offstage, along with Peter, you and I are mere spectators looking on helplessly, unable to divert the course of events by the slightest fraction of a degree.

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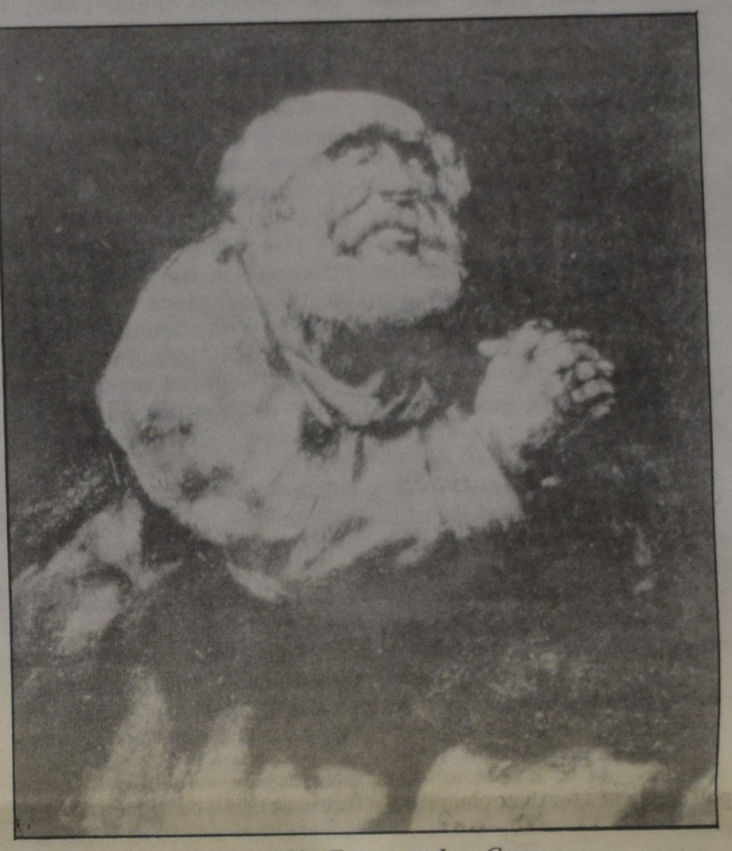
This is a drama you can only watch. You are in the darkness and the darkness is in you. The darkness seems to be dissolving you.



Peter's remorse, *as depicted by Francisco Jose Goya.*

Its weight bows you down and its coldness makes you stiff and heavy as waterlogged wood. Nearby a small fire burns to warm the spectators in the courtyard. As you draw closer, extending your hands toward its warmth, someone nudges you.

"Hey, don't I know you? Your face is familiar."

You shrug and turn up your collar.

"Sure, I've seen you before – with him!"

You turn just enough to see him point.

"Naw! You've got me mixed up with someone else."

You want to be left alone. Alone to sort out the doubts, to struggle with the darkness. All the light, the warmth, the vitality, the heart has been drained from you, and you are beset by monstrous shadows. Death is probing your insides, counting your vital organs.

You begin to move away, but he plucks you by the sleeve.

"Come on," he hisses, his dark eyes reflecting the orange glow of the fire, "It's all right, you can trust me. You're one of his followers, aren't you?"

Your throat constricts in fear and you're sure he can see your pulse hammering in the veins of your neck. You spin around on him, feigning an anger you don't feel. "Leave me alone! I hardly know the man."

He's a small, scrawny fellow with a long neck and a beak like a rooster. Harmless. Intimidated, he shrinks back, his Adam's apple wobbling nervously. His face grows sharp as an axe. He turns away, but casts a threatening look back as he retreats.

There really isn't any danger. If they'd wanted to, they could have arrested all the disciples, but they'd let everyone go, fleeing in different directions. He was the only one they really wanted. Yet, you can't shake off the fear; it is settling among the houses and in the streets like a poisonous fog. It is creeping everywhere.

Your eyes cautiously seek out the figure of the Accused. He is surrounded by taunting Pharisees, yapping at him like dogs around a deer, but he stands straight, staring out into the darkness.

Someone strikes him from behind. His whole body jars and his head whips back. He is looking this way, his eyes searching the darkness outside the courtroom.

"I hardly know the man.... I hardly know who or what he is...."

Not long ago, had he asked you to, you would have picked up a flail or a scythe, whatever was handy, and led a battalion of fresh recruits against a company of Roman veterans. Even tonight, you were ready to join Peter against the temple guards. Your hand was on your dagger and your blood was up.

And then all was limpness and confusion, and you found yourself fleeing between rows of olive trees, branches slapping at your face. Your legs still sting from the scratches you picked up running through bushes.

Follow me, he'd said. Follow where? This is one act you can't follow.

Again you feel his eyes probing the darkness, and you turn around, back toward the fire. In the flickering glow, you see the small black eyes and the rooster beak of the little man: he is talking to a woman and they are both looking at you. She nods vigorously, her teeth bared.

What does it matter what you say here in the shadows, away from the main scene where nothing counts? They're not after you; they have bigger fish to fry. Those two with their heads together are nothing but an annoyance. They'd love to be actors in the brightly lit hall, so they seek to play out a mini-trial here in the darkness. But no one cares.

What dreams and visions you had – dreams of heroism, of being tried by fire, of an Israel revived as in the glory days of David. But it's finished. Now it is all darkness and fog.

You shake yourself and move boldly to the fire. You are a nobody, you are nothing, so you have no need to fear. A few hours ago, you were one move away from being a hero, a somebody. Now you are just part of a crowd, an assembly of the bored and the curious seeking sensation.

Here, in the darkness, in the cold of despair, you just want to be left alone. You wrap your misery around you like a cloak. Now you, too, are anonymous.

✣✣✣

Somewhere a rooster crows. And then again.

Look, there goes Peter, on the other side of the square, hurrying off as if pursued by dogs. Where's he been hiding? He's been something of a disappointment. You expected more from a man like him....

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Government instigator in suits against churches

TORONTO (From the Anglican Church news service) — The government is acting in a short-sighted and counter-productive manner in its approach to residential schools lawsuits, and its lawyers are behaving in an aggressive and uncoordinated fashion, a senior bishop of the Anglican Church has charged.

Archbishop David Crawley, who chairs the church's residential schools steering committee, said government lawyers, not native people, are likely to force the church's General Synod, its national organization, into bankruptcy. In fact, the government is the only party against the church in seven out of eight suits now on the docket of the British Columbia Supreme Court. This will make it vastly more difficult for the church to contribute to long-term healing efforts, said Archbishop Crawley, the Metropolitan (senior bishop) of British Columbia and the Yukon.

Short-sighted strategy

"On the one hand, the government says it wants us to be part of alternative dispute resolution (ADR) processes," Archbishop Crawley said. "On the other, their lawyers are suing everything in sight — even band councils. They say they want healing, but their actions are dedicated mostly to limiting their own liability through suing others."

Seven thousand former students of residential schools are suing the Government of Canada asking compensation for cultural, physical and sexual abuse in the schools. About a quarter of those cases involve the Anglican Church of Canada, whose national mission body administered 24 schools under contract to the government — but in many cases it is the government, not the native plaintiff, who is suing the church.

In the only one of these cases to come to trial so far, the church and government were found jointly liable for sexual abuse committed by a former dormitory supervisor some 30 years ago. The supervisor, who was a federal government employee, was convicted in criminal court and is now in jail.

Eight other victims of the same abuser have court hearings scheduled for later this month. "But only one of these victims has chosen to press a suit against the church," Archbishop Crawley said. "In the other seven cases, the church is being sued by the government alone."

"It is this kind of government action that is most likely to force us to bankruptcy," Archbishop Crawley said. "If that happens, we will not be able to participate in ADR processes or to promote healing. It's a short-sighted strategy on the government's part, because if they force us to bankruptcy, they'll be left carrying the whole weight by themselves."

Church members support healing efforts

Archbishop Crawley said recent research with active Anglicans shows that church members want to support healing efforts and are prepared to contribute financially. And a nationwide poll indicates most Canadians believe we all share a degree of collective responsibility for the residential schools. In a recent Angus Reid poll conducted for three church organizations (Anglican, Presbyterian and Roman Catholic), 60 percent agreed "we are all responsible for helping Aboriginal Canadians who suffered abuse as children within the residential schools."

"As a national body, with thousands of Aboriginal members, we have a significant capacity to contribute substantially to reconciliation between the First Nations and other Canadians," Archbishop Crawley said. "Instead, we're heading for bankruptcy, fighting government claims against us."

Archbishop Crawley said representatives of church organizations involved in litigation have pressed department of justice representatives repeatedly to place a moratorium on its suits against the churches, particularly in areas where there is an attempt to resolve matters through alternative processes. He said the government has so far refused to consider any such measure.

"This leads to several ironic consequences," Archbishop Crawley said.

"First, we have been forced to spend an enormous amount on legal fees, far more than we have yet contributed to the people who deserve compensation.

"Second, although the government appears to be driven by a desire to save money, its approach is likely actually to increase its costs, not just in legal fees but also in compensation." Archbishop Crawley said he believes church members will make substantial contributions to healing efforts, if they know the money will be used to help victims. "But if members feel their donations are only going to pay legal fees, they'll choose to place their charitable dollars somewhere else." Archbishop Crawley noted the church's income is based entirely on voluntary contributions.

The third irony, Archbishop Crawley said, is that the church may have to seek early bankruptcy protection as a way of channeling its dwindling resources toward plaintiffs, rather than to the lawyers who represent them. "That's not meant to be disrespectful of lawyers, but, as things stand, legal fees have the first claim on any settlements we make. The plaintiffs get only what's left over. After a relatively few cases we'll be bankrupt and unable to respond to the just claims of other victims." Archbishop Crawley points out at least one diocese is already very close to bankruptcy.

"If we turn our assets over to a bankruptcy trustee instead, the trustee will be able to apportion the assets fairly, and the plaintiffs will get their money first. We'll still be bankrupt, but at least our assets will have helped those who most need it."

Explore other approaches

Better yet, Archbishop Crawley said, the government should sit down with Aboriginal and church organizations and explore other approaches to resolving the residential schools legacy. "Nobody we've talked to wants to see Canada's churches crippled by this," Archbishop Crawley said, "not the native people, not the Canadian public at large, not even the government." In fact, the Angus Reid poll showed 80 percent of Canadians oppose forcing churches into bankruptcy.

"One way or another, all the lawsuits will eventually be finished," Archbishop Crawley said, "but they won't bring us any closer to reconciliation. Lawsuits can't do that. We have to find better options."

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Lama Sabacthani

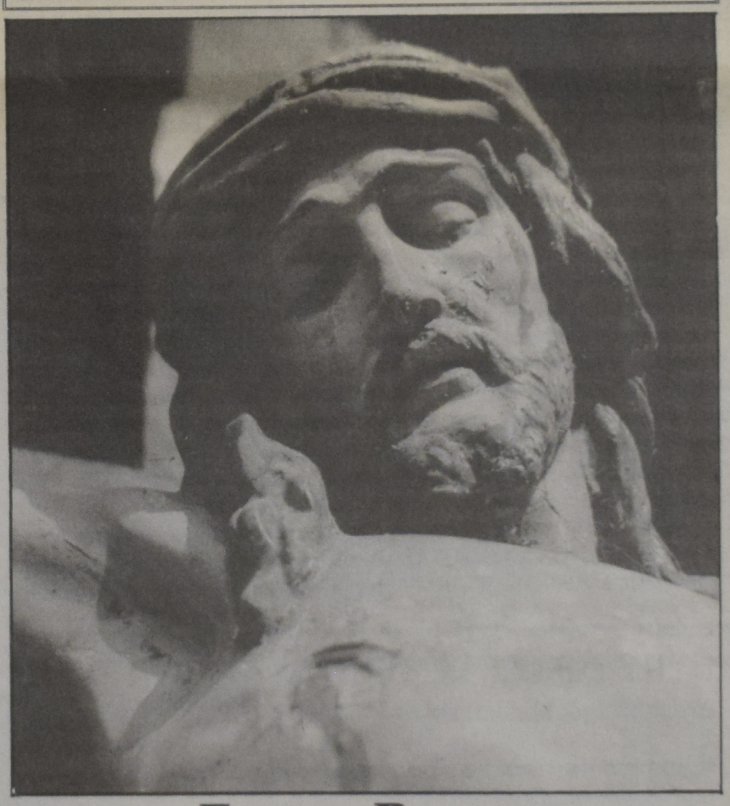
The learned gather year by
Year at tables in
California
Pretend that they are brothers
Make lists and
Sharpen swords and
Proclaim that the words of his mouth weren't said.
Elections are held on verses: which were
Rumours and which were lies? Agree
He did not rise. Nor heal.

Truths are revealed in monthly books about their findings.

The devil pats them on the back, then feasts,
And laughs at them,
Bent over, aching.

Each goes home alone.
Decided.
Does not wrestle with angels. No sound fills
Their empty houses but the rattling
Of chains which follow
Doubting ankles.
From time to time they
Hear the sighs of God: his hands thrown
In the air
With resignation

By Liz Windhorst



Easter Prayer

when news
breaks through
in darker shades
convinces hearts that
life's a grave
reveal the stone
once rolled away
and drench our hearts
with waves of praise
by Sonya VanderVeen Feddema

News Comment

Nose for News

Bert Hielema

THIS COLUMN COMES to you from the West. The past two weeks we have been visiting relatives: the family of my daughter in Los Angeles with their two and half-year old daughter, and our nephew in the greater Vancouver area, and their new baby. We also met there my wife's sister on a visit from Holland. For the occasion I took my laptop along so that I could keep on checking my e-mail and work on my column, saving my nuggets of wisdom as they enter my brain.

Southern California always needs more water. I remember visiting Santa Barbara a few years ago when a friend there told me that they have been thinking of towing an iceberg to provide them with pure and abundant *aqua Arctica*. That never materialized, of course —one of these hair-brained schemes that look good until it comes to its implementation. Still, although you'd never notice it directly, the dearth of water is a problem.

In spite of abundant rain in Northern California, the City of Angels — L.A. — is dry. Its concrete waterways are bare and empty, unlike the always busy freeways for which this city is well known.

TWO THINGS STRIKE ME in the part of the city where our daughter lives: the lack of Christian churches and the dark-green lawns. In my daily early morning running I scouted the entire neighborhood, and, apart from about ten synagogues, I did not see a single Christian church.

It is not that there are so many Jews living in the area. No, in many ways Jews are like the Reformed people: each brand has its own building. This can be seen especially on Saturday mornings when the different Judaic branches can be detected by their dress: some of the men and their sons walk to their service in pure black, as befits the orthodox Jew, while others are less darkly attired. All wear skullcaps.

No, this is not an exclusive Jewish district. The solemn men emerging from their homes on Sabbath morning are so striking because during the week the sidewalks are void of any pedestrians. After all this is L.A. where the reigning philosophy is: why walk when you can drive. But on the Sabbath it is a different matter. The men in black stand out for another reason as well: there is also a Sikh temple in the area, and its adherents go in pure white. It all makes for a delightful scenery: "...by their clothes ye shall know them."

If there are any Christians here, at this edge of Beverly Hills, in this rich part of town, they probably drive in their Cadillacs to the Crystal Cathedral. I saw a full page ad in the *Los Angeles Times* on March 25, 2000, inviting me to hear Robert H. Schuller and celebrate with him his 45 years of ministry and urging me to take my friends and neighbors to a service there. I didn't go. There is something about this man I don't quite trust.

THE ENTIRE SET-UP, the grandiosity of it all, such as a full mile of Bible verses carved in granite in the sidewalks, gives me the shudders, as if the essence of my Christian belief can be conveyed in a few lines, literally cast in stone.

The ad also boasted of the grounds having luxurious gardens "welcoming me with an aura of peace and a sense of the presence of God in a fragrant environment —flowers and fountains and sculptured pieces." I am sure that the entire set-up is quite in tune with the tremendous amount of secular wealth in this area: immense mansions, beautifully manicured lawns, rich horticultural growth in an environment which would be near desert without the aquifers, which are rapidly depleting.

Robert Schuller, that Sunday, started a new series entitled: *The MAN of the Millenniums*. I presume that he means Jesus. My question: Would Jesus really have felt at home in such temple-like surroundings? Would he have chosen the Crystal Cathedral for his ministry; this Jesus who consorted with the outcasts of society, preferring the company of the homeless and poor and disadvantaged?

I once saw a video made at the Schuller Institute, portraying the Christmas story. It was ultra-conventional, geared to the very conservative, uneducated, unimaginative mind and obviously produced at great cost, with professional talent imported from nearby Hollywood.

It seemed to me that the sole purpose of this production was to be acceptable to the child-like American Mind, in which Christianity has been reduced to some simplistic slogans, in which being wealthy is seen as a direct blessing of the Lord. I wonder whether any of the staff there have ever given any thought to the negative effects this entire enterprise is having on God's creation.

THIS BRINGS ME TO the second most striking feature about Beverly Hills: its lush gardens. Each morning I ran at 7 a.m. in short sleeves and marvelled at the golf-course-green lawns and bountiful flowers. Incredibly, in this arid land, I often had to tread carefully to avoid the water puddles created by the ubiquitous sprinkler systems which are on all night so that in the daylight cheap Mexican labor can come to mow the grass and apply more fertilizer and weed killer to keep the lawns an even, dark green without a single weed. One early morning a bus passed me; on its back door it had just one message in big letters: "Live for Today." That is what people here excel in: "Live for Today."

EACH HOUSE HAS AT LEAST TWO CARS, usually BMWs and Mercedes Benzes, with the result that the U.S. trade deficit has never been higher. The shortfall for the past month was the largest ever: Americans imported $30 billion more than they exported, and over the years this deficit has increased to trillions.

One day in the near future the foreigners who have advanced these vast sums to make this luxury life possible, will pull their money out and sell their US dollars. When they do, it will be a rude shock to these spoiled people and to the stock market. Then: to 'live for today' may come to haunt the people here, who now have their cake and are eating it all too.

WHILE WE WERE IN BEVERLY HILLS, the Oscars were being staged. The *Los Angeles Times* had some comments on the big winner: *American Beauty*. Wrote this commentator: "In *'Beauty'* nobody in suburbia is normal; the best surrender to self-indulgent temptation while the worst are revealed to be self-loathing murderers. Yet, as the explosive cheers in the audience made clear, that bleak message played well with Hollywood. Suburbia (like Beverly Hills, I might add) is stultifying, the audience learns, unless you quit your job, blackmail your ex-boss, smoke marijuana and seduce teenagers." One of the actors interviewed, commented: "Nobody is really bad in this movie, just shaped by society in such a way they can't be themselves, or feel joy."

I noticed this while running in the early morning glorious sunshine: nobody reacted to my cheerful greeting. I almost felt like a fool, but then I realized that what I saw in this paradise setting of Southern California, this 'American Beauty,' was a glamorous nihilism, accentuated by the absence of churches and the presence of unnatural lawns.

BACK IN CANADA, Vancouver looks decidedly poor, judging by the quality of the automobiles: where in Beverly Hills hardly a compact car is seen, the norm being upscale foreign, here people drive lowly domestic vehicles and many use the widely available public transportation, which is hardly there in L.A.

The *Vancouver Sun* had a two-page spread in big letters: SUSTAINABILITY, Managing Planet Earth. The article contained the usual dire warnings by five experts and, of course, the customary positive ending: "Our civilization is like a human being. Its appetite continues through the first two decades of physical growth. Then it suddenly levels off. This does not mean the person's growth is at an end. On the contrary, the richest stage of growth begins — mental, intellectual, emotional, and spiritual growth, growth that extends many times longer than the early phase."

In other words, the worst is over and the best is yet to come. In a sense I agree. The possibility to save the earth is there. However, (always that terrible "however") in order to save the earth, a radical conversion is needed. Overnight, human nature has to become pre-Adamic, pristine, a total contrast with the gospel of Hollywood, which powerfully preaches the message of nihilism. There is no doubt in my mind that the *Apres nous le deluge* (the heck with tomorrow; 'live only for today') attitude will prevail. And in the bottom of our hearts we all know that too. That's why pessimism and depression, suicide and anxiety are now so wide-spread.

Even the *Wall Street Journal*, on its front page, had a short news caption: "The earth's oceans are warming up at an alarming rate." No further explanation. Not needed either, because we know that the oceans determine the world's weather, functioning as a thermostat. Seventy percent of the global mass is ocean water. Once that heats up beyond the normal rate, the rest of the world follows.

Well, we did enjoy the trip, our yearly pilgrimage to the heart of our culture. I presume, as a product of two worlds, or perhaps three, Europe, Canada and the USA, I am, perhaps, able to see matters in a bit more critical light. I know that as a Christian I must have an open eye on the world and be very choosy about what it offers.

Bert and Diny Hielema have three of their five children living in various parts of the USA. They try to visit them at regular intervals.

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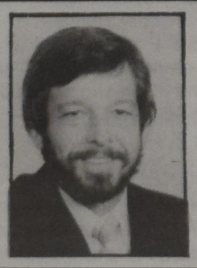

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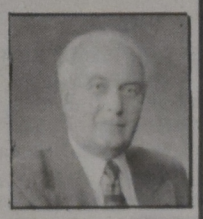

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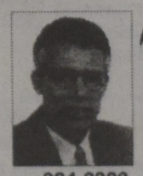

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Classifieds

Classified Rates

As of May 1999:
Note: 7% GST will be added to all prices listed below.

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION

Christian Courier is published on alternate Mondays. Copy deadline for each issue is 8:30 a.m. Wednesday, eight business days prior to publication.

RATES

All personal and family announcements: $16.00 per column inch (pci) + GST (columns are two inches wide). Display advertising re.: businesses and organizations: minimum $18.20 pci + GST, depending on design and frequency.

PHOTOS

There is a processing fee of $25 for the inclusion of a photograph with a personal or family announcement. Photo space is not charged pci, but we reserve the right to determine published photo size. Please note that we cannot use a faxed photo. We need either an original (which we will return) or a downloadable Internet image.

PERSONAL ADS

Christian Courier would be pleased to handle your personal ad in an efficient and discreet manner. The cost to set up a personal file under a unique file number is $35. Ads requesting correspondence with this file are run at $15 per insertion. All correspondence is immediately forwarded unopened.

NEWLYWEDS & NEW PARENTS

We offer a $25 one-year subscription to couples whose wedding is announced in *Christian Courier* AND to parents who announce the birth of a child in our paper. Please let us know when placing your ad that you want to take advantage of this offer.

SUBMITTING YOUR AD

mail: *Christian Courier*
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St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1
fax: 905-682-8313
email: ccadpromo@aol.com

OTHER INFORMATION

a) *Christian Courier* reserves the right to print classifieds using our usual format. And editing style.
b) Please provide us with clear copy. *Christian Courier* is not responsible for any errors due to hand written or phoned-in advertisements.

Birthday

April 19, 1920

"I will extol You, my God, O King; and I will bless Your name forever and ever. Every day I will bless You, and I will praise Your name forever and ever. Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised, and His greatness is unsearchable." (Psalm 145:1-3)

Mrs. ANN HEINEN - ALGERA
(nee DE JONG)

We thank God for the 80 years He has given to her.
Her grateful children John, Andy, Shirley, Sheila and Christine, their spouses and her many grandchildren.
We invite family and friends to an Open House at Holland Christian Homes, 7900 McLaughlin Rd., Brampton on April 22, 2000, from 2-4 p.m.

Home Sweet Classifieds!

Birthday

Sappemeer — Groningen — Brockville Ontario — Brampton Ontario

It is with great joy and thankfulness to the Lord, that we hope to celebrate the 90th birthday of

HARRY MULDER

on Good Friday, April 21, 2000.
Your children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren thank God for the long life He has given you.
You are an inspiration to all of us, we love you for that. In honor to you a family reunion will be held, D.V., in Kingston, Ont. on Easter weekend.
Home address: 7900 McLaughlin Rd. S., HT #306, Brampton ON L6Y 5A7

Anniversaries

Congratulations to Geert & Immie Booy on their 50th anniversary.

Hoogeveen the Neth. — Mississauga Canada
1950 — May 17 — 2000

GEERT and IMMIE BOOY
(nee DEKKER)

are grateful to the Lord for granting them 50 years together.
"Commit your way to the Lord; trust in Him and He will act." (Psalm 37:5)
Congratulations to Mom and Dad on your anniversary!
With love from your children and grandchildren:
Hank Booy — Mississauga, Ont.
Gia & Adrian Gelok — Glen Williams, Ont.
Emma, Paul, Michelle
Rita & Glenn Carney — Frederickhouse, Ont.
Rebecca, Ian & Angel, Sarah, Lisa, Lydia, Seth, Ryan
John & Johanna Booy — Salt Spring Island, B.C.
Aaron, Daniel, Micah
Arlene & Jack VanRyn — Lisle, Ont.
Tim, Lea, David
We will celebrate the occasion with an Open House on May 20, 2000, D.V., from 2-4 p.m. at the Clarkson Christian Reformed Church, Mississauga, Ont.
Best wishes only, please.
Home address: 590 Byngmount Ave., Mississauga ON L0M 1M0

Anniversaries

Bloomfield — Pt.Dover
1950 — April 30 — 2000

"The counsel of the Lord stands forever, the plans of His heart to all generations. Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, and the people whom He has chosen as His own inheritance." (Psalm 33:11,12)
To God be the glory. It is with joy and thanksgiving in our hearts to God for His covenantal faithfulness in being able, as a family, to celebrate the 50th anniversary of our wonderful parents

JACK and EMMY BRUINING
(nee KUGEL)

"I will praise the name of God with a song, and will magnify Him with thanksgiving." (Psalm 69:30)
We, their children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren, are thankful for the fifty years they've shared together and we pray that God may continue to bless them and uphold them in the future.
Ben & Jessie Bruining — Pt. Dover, Ont.
Jeff (deceased May 1997), Julie & Roger (Caleb, Josie), Jeremy, Amy & Andrew (Ethan), Rebecca, Leanne
Gina & Jim Numan — Millgrove, Ont.
Angela & Eric, Chris & Stacey (Olivia), Terry & Jocinda, David, Renee. Jessica, James
Peter & Lydia Bruining — Dunnville, Ont.
Rachel, Joshua, Rheanna, Katelyn
Alan & Marian Bruining — Hagersville, Ont.
Bradley, Mark, Sarah, Leah
Elizabeth & Ted Kemper — Wellandport, Ont.
Benjamin, Brian, Dennis, Alisha, Michelle, Lisa
Richard & Patricia Bruining — Dunnville, Ont.
Caryn, Nicole, Richard, Jennifer
Alma & Tyler Meijaard — Cambridge, Ont.
Michael, Melissa, Christina, Scott, Adam
An Open House will be held on Saturday, April 29, 2000, from 2-4 p.m. at Park View Meadows, Townsend. Best wishes only.
Home address:
RR 2 Port Dover ON N0A 1N2

Bloomfield — Brighton
1960 — April 30 — 2000

With joy and thanksgiving to the Lord we hope to celebrate the

40th wedding anniversary

of our father, mother and grandparents

HENRY and RITA HAKKESTEEGT
(nee HEIDEMAN)

We thank the Lord for His faithfulness and grace that He has shown to them and pray that He will continue to bless and keep them in His loving care.
Winnie & Albert Visser
Erin, Joel, Nathan, Brent
Kirby & Arlene Hakkesteegt
Kevin, Bryce, Julie, Angela
Please join us in celebrating at an Open House on Saturday, April 29, 2000, D.V., from 2-4 p.m. at Brighton Fellowship Christian Reformed Church, Brighton, Ont.
Best wishes only, please.
Home address: 15786 HWY #2, RR 3, Brighton ON K0K 1H0

HAPPY 55th WEDDING ANNIVERSARY
for
GERRIT JAN and AALTJE ROSEBOOM
on April 7, 2000, from your family.
Correspondence address:
23 Acadia Dr., Welland ON L3C 6L4
Tel: 905-735-5518

40th ANNIVERSARY

Pembroke — Woodstock
1960 — April 29 — 2000

RICHARD and HARRIET ZOMER
(nee ROOK)

With thankfulness to God, we announce the 40th wedding anniversary of our parents.
With love from their children and grandchildren:
Albert & Alice Zomer
Jianna, Ricky, Charles
Harley & Marian Zomer
Eric, Matthew
Freda Zomer
Jane & Jim deHaan
Joshua, Mark
Rick & Michelle Zomer
Best wishes can be sent to:
346 Brompton Ave., Woodstock ON N4S 7J9

Obituary

We praise the Lord for releasing Mom from her pain and taking her home to Himself.

JUDY HIBMA (nee ALGERA)

formerly of London, Ont., passed away at Woodstock Private Hospital on Saturday, Feb. 5, 2000, in her 90th year.
Beloved wife of the late Don Hibma (1982).
Dear mother of
Gaye & Marthinus Datema — Blyth
Cobie & William Hanenburg — Innerkip
Richard & Wendy Hibma — London
John & Heather Hibma — Woodstock
Sippe & Delia Hibma — Cathcart
Loved grandmother of 17 grandchildren and 35 great-grandchildren.
Dear sister of Sylvia of B.C. and Siepke of the Netherlands.
Predeceased by her daughters Dorothy (1952) and Sandy (1962), a brother Pete and sister Stientje. Judy was a long-time member of the Christian Reformed Churches.
Corresp. address: Gaye Datema, RR 3, Blyth ON N0M 1H0

Personal

Christian widow, 75+, would like **to hear from a Christian man**, who also feels lonely so that together we could maybe still find some happiness in the evening of our life. Please send letters to:
File #2705, c/o Christian Courier, 4-261 Martindale Rd., St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1

Consider placing a Personal Ad. $16.00/column inch per insertion. One time set-up fee is $35.00 for a box number. GST is extra..

Obituary

Voorhout, the Neth. — Grimsby, Ont.
July 16, 1910 - March 28, 2000

"I called out on the name of the Lord: 'O Lord, save me!'" (Ps. 116:4)

GRETA BERGMAN COLYN

After a brief time of suffering, eased by the loving care of the staff of Shalom Manor, and surrounded by her family she went home to be with her Lord and Savior.
Mom was predeceased by her husband Jo in 1982 after a marriage of 47 years. Also predeceased by a granddaughter Sonya Bezuyen (1978), daughter-in-law Stena Bergman (1987) and son-in-law Aldert Louwes (1991).
Lovingly remembered by her children:
Ada Louwes
Willy & Siemon Antuma
Margaret & George Prinsen
Debbie & Jack Bezuyen
Joanne & Hank Poortinga
John & Alice Bergman
Pete & Evelyn Bergman
Helen & Angelo Mosca
Bill & Randa Bergman
Loving Oma to 37 grandchildren and Oma the Great to 59 great-grandchildren.
Funeral service celebrating Mom's life was held at Maranatha CRC in St. Catharines, Ont. on April 1, 2000.
Ceremony officiated by her grandson Rev. Al Bezuyen.
"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." (Ps. 116:15)
Correspondence address:
Mrs. Ada Louwes, PO Box 120, Vineland, ON L0R 2C0

Teachers

KITCHENER, Ont.:
Laurentian Hills Christian School is an interdenominational Christian school of 230 students, located in the beautiful Region of Waterloo. We invite applications for a **possible opening** at the **primary level.** If you wish to join our staff of 14 teachers, please send your resume and philosophy of education to:

Mr. Luke Janssen, Principal
Laurentian Hills Christian School
11 Laurentian Dr., Kitchener ON
N2E 1C1
Phone: 519-576-6700;
Fax: 519-576-2583

London District Christian Secondary School, LONDON, Ont.
Effective date of vacancy: Aug. 1, 2000
Due to an increase in enrolment, London District Christian Secondary School invites applications for a **Science/Math position**, a position involving a combination of courses, and a **part-time drama position (approximately 60%).** The ideal drama applicant will have experience in professional and/or amateur theatre.
Candidates with future aspirations for a role in student services or administration (vice-principal) are encouraged to apply.
Please send a letter of application, a resume with a list of references, a transcript, and a statement of faith to:

Henry Kooy, Principal
London District Christian Secondary School
24 Braesyde Ave., London ON
N5W 1V3
Phone: 519-455-4360;
Fax: 519-455-4364
e-mail: office@ldcss.on.ca

Classifieds

Teachers

OAKVILLE, Ont.:
Oakville Christian School requires a **primary or junior teacher** for September 2000. An **intermediate level position may also be open**. Computer skills would be an asset. Please send a letter of application, statement of faith and resume to the
Principal, Oakville Christian School
112 Third Line, Oakville ON
L6L 3Z6. Phone calls are welcome at 905-825-1247 ext.223.
We look forward to hearing from you.

ORILLIA, Ont.
Orillia Christian School, located in the "Sunshine City" on the beautiful shores of Lake Simcoe, invites candidates to apply for the following positions:
- **a definite part-time teacher in the intermediate division.**
- **a definite full-time daycare supervisor.**

OCS is an interdenominational K-8 school that has just recently completed a new computer lab and a beautiful gym facility. If you are interested in joining our dedicated team, please send a letter of application, a resume, and a personal statement of faith to:
George Hoytema, Principal
Orillia Christian School
PO Box 862 Orillia, ON L3V 6K8
Phone/Fax: 705-326-0532

BRANTFORD, Ont.:
Brantford Christian School invites applications for a **60% J/K-S/K position.** Seniors attend three full days a week. They are combined with juniors in the mornings.
What would attract you to B.C.S.? A kingdom vision, interdenominational school, with a student population of 165. Salary - 100% of OCSTA grid. Wonderful staff relationship. Large, natural school yard, with playground equipment. 20 minute drive from Redeemer College. Very economical housing in Brantford. Preference will be given to applicants with a specialty in music.
Please submit a short autobiography, statement of faith and resume to:
Mr. Chris Vander Veen, Principal
Brantford Christian School
7 Calvin St, Brantford ON N3S 3E4
Phone: 519-752-0433;
Fax: 519-752-6088
e-mail: bcs@bfree.on.ca

DRAYTON, Ont.:
Calvin Christian School, located in Drayton in Midwestern Ontario, has **possible openings** in both the **junior and intermediate levels**. We invite teachers who are interested in joining a staff of enthusiastic teachers to send in their letters of application and resumes to the principal, Willy Katerberg. Our mailing address is:
Box 141, 35 High St., Drayton ON N0G 1P0
Our phone and fax is **519-638-2935** and our e-mail is **ccs@freespace.net**

For advertising rates and info, call: 1-800-969-4838

Church Anniversary

ANNOUNCEMENT FOR 25th ANNIVERSARY
You are invited to join us in the celebration of our 25th anniversary. God's faithfulness has brought **Maranatha Christian Reformed Church of Lethbridge, Alberta** to this point and we are thankful. There will be a social on Friday, **August 18, 2000**, a barbecue on Saturday and three celebration services on Sunday. Contact Hilda Visser at **403-381-8049.**

Church News

Christian Reformed Church:

Dr. André Basson from South Africa has accepted a call to **Rehoboth CRC, Niagara Falls, Ont.**

Job Opportunities

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Christian Horizons, an evangelical Christian organization serving people with developmental disabilities, is presently receiving resumes for the position of

Program Manager

in the Toronto area. The successful candidate must have the ability to work effectively in a changing environment. Leadership, discipleship, coaching, vision planning, problem-solving, communication and computer skills are required. You must have a proven ability to develop and monitor fiscal budgets that lead to sustainable services. A knowledge of behavior management principles is an asset. Applicants must also have a minimum of two years managerial experience. A valid driver's licence is also required.

Please forward your resume to:
Tania Rustenburg
4375 Chesswood Ave.
North York, ON M3J 2C2
or fax 416-630-2579

We thank all those who apply but only those who qualify based on the above will be contacted.

Event

Retirement Open House!

An Open House to honour

TREENA SYBERSMA

on the occasion of her retirement will be held
Friday, June 16, 2000 at 7 p.m.
Georgetown District Christian School
11643 Trafalgar Road, Georgetown, Ontario.

Mrs. Sybersma has taught at Georgetown District Christian School since 1966, and has served as Principal for the last ten years. The Board, Staff and Membership thank her for her faithful and competent service, and wish her God's blessings in the future. Family, friends, former student and colleagues are invited to attend. For more information, contact the school at 905-877-4221.

MARANATHA CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

Is expanding and will include Grade 10 in September 2000!

Secondary Division
Dynamic teachers interested in a growing interdenominational school are invited to apply for positions in: Mathematics, Science and Technology.

Elementary Division
As a result of growth there will be
a position for a Resource Teacher (50%),
a Senior Kindergarten position (maternity leave 60%),
and a Computer Coordinator (12.5%).
Positions can be combined.

Send applications and complete résumé as soon as possible, including statement of Vision of Christian Education to:
William Van Dyke, Principal
Maranatha Christian Academy
939 Northwood St., Windsor, ON N9E 2B4
Information: 519-966-7424; Fax: 519-966-9519

DORDT COLLEGE

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Beginning August 2000

Theatre History and Introduction to the Arts; other possibilities include acting, directing, design, and stagecraft

THEATRE ARTS DEPARTMENT

Review of applications will continue until the position is filled. Qualifications include either a M.F.A. in Design or Ph.D. in History and Literature. When the degree is in one area, extensive exposure in the other is required. To apply, qualified persons committed to a Reformed, biblical perspective and educational philosophy are encouraged to send an e-mail/letter of inquiry and a curriculum vitae/resume to:

Dr. Rockne McCarthy
Vice President for Academic Affairs
Dordt College
498 4th Avenue NE
Sioux Center, IA 51250-1697
Facsimile: 712-722-4496
E-mail: vpaa@dordt.edu
Web site: www.dordt.edu/offices/acadaff

Dordt College encourages the nominations and candidacies of women, minorities, and persons with disabilities.

Vernon CRC, Vernon, BC is seeking a full-time

DIRECTOR OF YOUTH MINISTRIES

to develop and direct youth ministry programs. This is a newly established position. We are looking for someone with a clear sense of calling, a passion for youth and a solid commitment to the Reformed perspective. A Bachelor's degree or equivalent experience is desired. A full time job description is available upon request.

Send inquiries and resumes to:
Search Committee
Vernon Christian Reformed Church
3605 12th Street
Vernon, BC V1T 3S7
Phone: 250-545-3926 Fax: 250-545-3924

Classifieds

14 DAY MEDITERRANEAN CRUISE

Oct. 14, 2000
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Social Service Work

Become a part of our team of committed professionals providing loving care for needy children.

Mutual Support Systems, a parent model network of rural group foster homes in the Niagara peninsula for children experiencing emotional and behavioural difficulties is searching for the following as part of its recent expansion:

RESIDENTIAL CHILD CARE WORKERS.
Related educational background is an asset. Competitive salary and benefits. This live-in position provides opportunities for out-of-province candidates.

Please contact Randy Klassen at:
Mutual Support Systems
P.O. Box 397
Fenwick, ON L0S 1C0
phone: 905-892-4332
e-mail: rklassen@mutualsupport.net
Visit us at:
http://www.mutualsupport.net

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St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1

DEALING WITH DIFFICULT PEOPLE

A training event for church leaders, sponsored by Mennonite and Brethren in Christ Conciliation Services of Canada, will be held at The University of Waterloo; Waterloo, Ontario
June 20 - 23, 2000
Trainer is REV. SPEED LEAS of THE ALBAN INSTITUTE
Cost: $400.00 (includes lunches, materials, parking and GST)
Contact: Nan Cressman by
phone: 705-782-0287 or fax: 705-782-6276
or e-mail: cressman@soonet.ca

The King's University College

POSITION OPENINGS

RESIDENCE DIRECTOR

The Kings University College, a four-year degree- granting Christian institution, is seeking a Resident Director to begin duties August 1, 2000.

This position calls for a qualified individual or couple to provide excellent leadership in the residence at Kings which currently houses in excess of 90 students. The Resident Director is required to live in the three bedroom suite located in the residence facility. This position is nearly full time: 80% for 10 months and requires irregular hours.

The Resident Director (RD) is responsible for the formation and coordination of a comprehensive residence program fostering a lively, Christian community which is safe, conducive to studying, and supportive of students making the transition to College life. The RD is involved with students on a regular and personal basis, assisting students in planning social and faith-building events. The RD provides support and advice as required, develops and administers housing policies, and contributes to the overall formation of a healthy learning and living community. The Resident Director trains, supervises, and leads a team of student assistants.

The qualified applicant will have excellent communication skills, strong organizational abilities, and mature interpersonal and relational skills with a demonstrated Christian commitment. Experience in working with young people and/or dormitory supervision is a significant asset. A university degree is preferred.

The Resident Director reports directly to the Dean of Students.

Salary Range: $ 2,000 - $ 2,300/month.

Application deadline: May 5, 2000

Send letter of application, resume and two references to:

RoyBerkenbosch, Dean of Students
The King's University College
9125 - 50 St.,Edmonton, AB, T6B 2H3
phone: 780-465-8304, fax: 780-465-3534
email: skward@kingsu.ab.ca, web: www.kingsu.ab.ca

Program Coordinator

Christian Stewardship Services (CSS), in partnership with the Christian Reformed Church in Canada, requires a **Program Coordinator** for its Stewardship Education Program. This person will assist churches in the teaching and practising of biblical stewardship to help church members live stewardly lives.

The Program Coordinator must possess a strong, broad understanding of the Biblical concepts of stewardship, the use of financial resources and giving. The successful applicant will have:

- Positive interpersonal relationship skills
- Group presentation and facilitation abilities
- Experience and skills in adult education.

Familiarity with CSS, its sponsoring agencies and constituencies will be a definite asset. Sound computer skills are essential. The position requires regular travel across Canada and is full-time for an initial period of two years (renewable). The deadline for completed applications is May 15, 2000.

For an application package and more information, please contact:

CSS

Christian Stewardship Services
Henry Eygenraam, Executive Director
315 - 600 Alden Road Markham, Ontario L3R 0E7
Telephone: (905) 947-9262
Fax: (905) 947-9263
Email: henrye@csservices.ca

INSTITUTE FOR CHRISTIAN STUDIES

ICS

ICS seeks to fill a vacancy in Philosophy effective July 1, 2001.
Applicants must have a Ph.D. in the field and must subscribe to the Christian basis of the Institute. Applicants should have teaching experience (preferably also at the graduate level) and a record of research and publications in ontology, epistemology or a related field. Responsibilities include graduate teaching and supervision, and a program of research and publishing. Further details are available on request. Base salary is approximately $43,000 + experience increments and benefits.

In accordance with Canadian immigration laws, this advertisement is directed to Canadian citizens and permanent residents.

Qualified candidates should send a letter of application, CV and names of three references before June 30, 2000 to:

Dr. Harry Fernhout,
President,
Institute for Christian Studies
229 College Street,
Suite 200, Toronto,
Ontario, M5T 1R4

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Classifieds

Teachers

JARVIS, Ont.:
Jarvis District Christian School invites applications for **possible openings**, effective September, 2000.
* A full-time Grade 2 position
* A full-time combined Grade 3/4 position
* A full-time Grade 8 position with some rotation into Grade 7

Strengths in the areas of French, Music, and the ability to be the lead computer person for the school would be a real asset. JDCS is located 40 minutes south of Hamilton, Ontario near Lake Erie.
Please send your letter of application, resume and statement of philosophy of education to:

Garry Glasbergen, Principal
Jarvis District Christian School
Box 520
Jarvis ON N0A 1J0
Phone: 519-587-4444
Fax: 519-587-2985

NEWMARKET, Ont.:
Holland Marsh District Christian School, Newmarket, Ont., has **possible openings** in the primary, junior and intermediate grades. Please send your resume including statement of faith and philosophy of education to:

Mr. Henry Lise, Principal
18955 Dufferin St., RR 2,
Newmarket ON L3Y 4V9
www.neptune.on.ca/~hmdcs
Fax: 905-775-2395;
e-mail: hmdcs@neptune.on.ca

OTTAWA, Ont.:
Ottawa Christian School is interested in applications from qualified, Christian teachers for possible openings of a **full-time French** position (may be split into two part-time positions) a **part-time music** position and more time for resource. We have a school of 200+ students from Junior Kindergarten to Grade Eight.
Please submit your resume to:

Mrs. Helleman, Principal
Ottawa Christian School
2191 Benjamin Ave., Ottawa ON
K2A 1P6
or fax to 613-722-5839

TORONTO, Ont.:
Toronto District Christian High School invites applicants for a **Chemistry** and **Bible** teacher. These positions begin August 1, 2000. Please send a resume complete with a list of references, a transcript of university courses taken and a statement of faith to:

Ren Siebenga, TDCH
377 Woodbridge Ave.,
Woodbridge ON L4L 2S8.
E-mail: rsiebeng@tdchristian.on.ca

LACOMBE, Alta.: Lacombe Christian School, approximately 383 students in K-9, located in central Alberta invites applications from qualified teachers for a **primary grade school teacher**. Applicants must qualify for Alberta teacher certification. Please send resume to:

Martin Folkerts
Lacombe Christian School
5206 58 Street
Lacombe AB T4L 1G9
phone: 403-782-6531
fax: 403-782-5760

CENTENNIAL CHRISTIAN SCHOOL
TERRACE, B. C.
TEACHING POSITIONS OPEN

Centennial Christian School invites applications from committed, Christian educators to fill openings for the 2000/2001 school year in the following areas:

Intermediate: Grade 7
High School: Grade 8 - (2 positions)
Humanities focus (Bible, English, Socials)
Grades 8-10 Art and Elementary Art
Grades 9-11 openings in:
English, Socials, Math

These positions may also involve teaching duties in other areas. Centennial Christian School is an inter-denominational school and presently offers Christian education to approximately 235 students in Kindergarten - Grade 10. The addition of Grades 11 (Sept. 2000) and 12 (Sept. 2001) is being planned. This has created possible new openings as stated above. Please contact the principal or vice principal for further details and send letter of application, resume and other pertinent information to:

Centennial Christian School
Frank Voogd - Principal
Curtis Tuininga - Vice Principal
3608 Sparks Street
Terrace, B.C.
V8G 2V6
Phone: (250) 635-6173
Fax: (250) 635-9385

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Reformed Faith Witness.

THE KING'S UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

a four-year degree-granting Christian institution offering undergraduate university programs, has an opening for

DIRECTOR OF ENROLMENT MANAGEMENT

Reporting to the President, the Director will oversee a department responsible for recruitment of new students, development of institutional practices that promote student retention, and financial aid administration. The position includes policy direction, strategic planning, department administration, supervision of staff, and direct participation in the recruitment of students. The successful candidate will have demonstrated organizational and communication skills, hands-on experience and a proven record in university-level student recruitment and enrolment management, and will understand and endorse the College's Christian educational mission. A university degree is required for this position, and education with a strong marketing and/or communication component will be a significant asset.

Application deadline: May 5, 2000 or until filled

In accordance with Canadian immigration regulations, this advertisement is addressed first to Canadian citizens and permanent residents. The College encourages all qualified female and male candidates, including visible minorities, to apply.

Send applications, including complete resume to:
Dr. Henk Van Andel, President
The King's University College
9125 - 50 Street, Edmonton, AB T6B 2H3
phone: 780-465-8302 fax: 780-465-3534
e-mail: *hvanande@kingsu.ab.ca*
web: *www.KingsU.ab.ca*

HANEY-PITT MEADOWS CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

Located in Maple Ridge, we are now accepting resumes for the following positions:

- Full-time and part-time senior high school positions with strengths in Math, Science, Socials, Drama, French and Music
- Full-time Grade 3 position
- Part-time High School Librarian for Grades 8 - 11
- Part-time Special Needs Aide

Full resumes with Christian Philosophy of Education and references can be directed to:

Rod Berg
Haney-Pitt Meadows Christian School
12140 - 203 Street
Maple Ridge, BC V2X 4V5
604-465-4442

Our school offers a K-10 program to 300 students and is presently expanding into Grades 11 and 12 over the next two years. We have been providing Christian Education to the Maple Ridge area for the past 43 years. We are located 40 minutes east of Vancouver on the north side of the Fraser River.

Emmanuel Christian School

Is inviting applications for the position of:

Principal

We are an English language, interdenominational Christian school (K – 11) serving the Christian community in the Montreal (Quebec) area for twenty-five years. We receive government funding and offer a fully accredited curriculum including a bilingual program at the primary level and French options at the secondary level to 320 students.

The ideal candidate will have a passion for Christian education and have proven skills in Spiritual, Instructional, Staff and Student leadership. Proficiency in the French language would be an asset.

Please forward your resume, a personal statement of your faith and philosophy of Christian education to:

Fred Horst - Chairman of the Search Committee
4294 Graham Drive, Pierrefonds, Quebec
H9H 2B6
Tel: (514) 620-9528

Beacon Christian High School

invites applications for an opening in

ENGLISH and DRAMA

for the 2000-2001 school year. Qualified Christian teachers who love God, high school students, and learning and teaching English and drama are asked to send a letter of application and a resume to:

Mr. Ted Harris, Principal
Beacon Christian High School
2 O'Malley Dr.,
St. Catharines, ON L2N 6N7
Tel: 905-937-7411 / Fax: 905-937-1130

Classifieds

Vacations

CHRISTIAN FAMILY RESORT
We are a small clean Family Resort, located on beautiful Lime Stone Lake, **30 km north of Parry Sound** on Highway 124. The two-bedroom cottages are situated close to the lake and have south/western exposure. Prices range from $285. to $400. a week.
For more information phone: (not on Sundays) **905-304-6250** or during the season: **705-389-2265.**

Job Opportunities

The Kentville (Nova Scotia) CRC is seeking a **Director of Music Ministries** to serve as primary accompanist, lead and organize choirs and provide leadership in blending traditional and contemporary worship. For a job description, contact Wendy La Pierre at **902-542-1663** or **WendyLaPierre@Yahoo.com**

Miscellaneous

MEADOW VALLEY HOUSE
Seniors Residence, Dundas, Ont.
24-hour assisted daily living care, meals, laundry service provided. English and Dutch spoken. For more info **call 905-627-1108.**

Accommodation Wanted

Accommodation wanted: Single 33-year-old male, entering Redeemer in September 2000, seeks a reasonably priced apartment, or rooms with kitchen privileges, or shared accommodation, **beginning September 2000.** Prefer not more than 15 min. bike-ride from Redeemer. Am able to supply furniture. Non-smoker/non-drinker. Ian Van Leeuwen **519-291-9968** evenings 6-7 p.m. is best.

Accommodations

Central location in **Vineland, Ont.,** close to St. Catharines and Beamsville. Country living. Two girls looking for **two more roommates**. Call **905-563-0127, ask for Rachel.**

Summer Ministry & Employment Opportunity

Christian Horizons Conference Centre - Paisley, Ontario

Providing quality vacation services for teenagers and adults with developmental disabilities and a break for their families.

We are looking for committed Christians who have a willingness to serve and learn. Lots of energy and enthusiasm.

Role Duration: June 25 - September 1, 2000.
Training is provided June 21 - 25.

All staff receive free room and board and a small wage ($125-300/week) for their valued provision of time, energy and service to our guests.

Please Fax or Mail Resume to:
Claire Porter, Director
Christian Horizons Conference Centre
4442 Bruce Rd. 1, RR 2, Paisley, ON N0G 2N0
Phone: 519-353-5756 Fax: 519-353-5136
e-mail: chcc@bmts.com

An evangelical Christian organization that supports individuals with developmental disabilities is recruiting applicants to work with people living in the Brampton and Halton area. You must be able to work as part of a caring team while upholding the rights and choices of people in a way which values people's differences. You must also be adaptable and calm in stressful situations. Relief and contract positions are available. DSW/PSW or equivalent is an asset. Interested applicants should send their resume to the attention of:

Janet Paul
4373 Chesswood Ave.
North York, ON M3J 2C2
or they may be faxed to: 416-630-2579.
Applicants must have a valid driver's licence and be willing to work shifts, including evenings and weekends.

We thank all that respond, but only those applicants who qualify for an interview will be contacted.

REDEEMER
A CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

Welcomes applications for possible part-time instructor positions in the 2000/01 academic year to teach the following courses:

Business: Taxation, Business Information Systems, Operations Management, Advertising and Promotion, Introduction to Economics: Micro, Finance II
Computer Science
Mathematics: Fundamentals of Mathematics, Differential and Integral Calculus, Calculus I
Phys. Ed: Physical Health and Fitness
Political Science: Introduction to Political Ideologies, Canadian Government and Politics, Recent Political Theory
Psychology: Personality, Psychology of Testing and Measurement
Religion: Ethics

Also required are part-time **Lab Instructors** in:

Chemistry - Introductory level
Environmental Science - Introductory level

Applicants should possess a Master's degree or a Doctorate, and should be in agreement with the Reformed Christian basis of the College. **Deadline: April 28, 2000** or until filled. Direct applications and the names of three referees to: ***Dr. M. Elaine Botha, Vice-President (Academic), Redeemer College, 777 Garner Rd. E., Ancaster, ON L9K 1J4.*** **(Fax: (905) 648-2134; or e-mail: ebotha@redeemer.on.ca).** Applications received within the past year will still be considered. Only persons considered for interviews will be contacted.

Part-time Youth Worker

Do you have training or experience in youth ministry?
Are you connected to contemporary culture?
Do you relate well to teenagers?

First Christian Reformed Church in Kingston, located in the beautiful Thousand Islands area of Lake Ontario, could use your help. Our congregation is looking for a part-time youth worker to assist in developing our youth ministries. Several programs are already established and growing, but we're looking for additional expertise and support to enhance them. First CRC has a sizeable number of children under 18 years of age, and this new position is part of our commitment to develop their faith and life within the Christian community.

Would you like a part-time job that will help to change the world?
Sound interesting?
Call us at (613) 542-8350 for a complete position description.
Or forward your resume to us at:
Fax: (613) 542-7811
Email: 1stcrc@kos.net
Conventional mail: 310 Kingscourt Ave., Kingston, ON K7K 4R3.

First Victoria Christian Reformed Church
in the capital city of beautiful British Columbia
is seeking a
FULL-TIME PASTOR

to provide sound biblical preaching that has a motivating effect on the youth of today, as well as the youth of yesterday. In addition, the pastor will provide leadership in worship, church education and pastoral care. The church has 240 professing and 80 non-professing members who enjoy a variety of worship expressions. Pastors interested in a potential call are encouraged to submit their resumes. A church profile is available.

Please contact:
Gerry Ensing, Search Committee Chair
c/o First Christian Reformed Church, 661 Agnes Street
Victoria, BC, V8Z 2E7, CANADA
Telephone: 250-479-5124; Fax: 250-479-0899;
home phone 250-727-0248; e-mail: gensing@telus.net

Grace Christian Reformed Church

Situated on the level plains of Chatham-Kent in Beautiful Southwestern Ontario, is seeking a

Full-time
Director of Youth Ministries

Our congregation of 532 members requires an ordained or non-ordained Youth Leader who will give direction and leadership to our existing youth programs. Those who have a passion for this ministry and are committed to a Reformed perspective may direct their resume and/or inquiries to:

Jeff Dam
519-352-2940 ext. 108 (work)
519-354-5317 (home)
e-mail: jeffdam@ciaccess.com
48 Shawnee Trail
Chatham, ON N7M 6J7
Request a church profile by fax: 519-436-1558

Events/Classifieds

Calendar of Events

Items appearing in this column are run free of charge if they advertise an admission-free event, if they accompany an ad for the same event, or at the discretion of CC. In case of free listing, space limitations apply. The charge otherwise is $7.50 per line, or $1.50 per 1/3 line, per insertion.

April 29	Ontario Christian Male Chorus concert - London Gospel Temple, **London**, Ont. 7:30 p.m. (See display ad for ticket info.) (#)
April 30	Dutch Service - Ancaster CRC, Hwy. 53, **Ancaster**, Ont. 3 p.m., Rev. John Hellinga. (#)
May 6	Spring Concert of sacred choral music. 100 voices combined. St. Thomas Ladies' Choir, "Gloria in Excelsis" with special guests, Sarnia Ladies' Choir "Jubilate" and Walkerton Ladies' Choir "Bel Canto." Freewill offering. Faith Baptist Church, 109 Chestnut St., **St. Thomas,** Ont. 7:30 p.m. (#)
May 6	40th Anniversary Calvin Memorial Chr. School, **St.Catharines,** Ont. for info call 905-937-6302.
May 7	Annual Benefit Concert for the Canadian Bible Society. Presented by St. Thomas District Male Choir "Crescendo" with guest tenor John DeJager. Knox Presbyterian Church, Hincks St., **St. Thomas,** Ont. 7:30 pm. Freewill offering. See display ad Apr. 17 issue. (#)
May 20	Retirement Celebration Pastor Jack & Jennie Quartel, Clinton Chr. School, **Clinton,** Ont.; dinner 5:30 p.m. program 7:30 p.m. See display ad in issue. (#)
May 27, 28	50th Anniversary **Brockville** CRC, Ont. For info call Kathy VandenBerg 613-348-3569, or Church office at 613-345-2050.
June 17-18	50th Anniversary **Drayton** CRC, Ont. For info call 519-638-3902.
June 20-23	Dealing with Difficult People training event at UW, **Waterloo,** Ont. See Display ad Apr. 17 issue.(#)
July 11-13	Coffee Break/Story Hour Convention, **Grand Rapids,** Mich. Register by April 15. See Apr. 3 issue. (#)

You Are Invited to the

40th Anniversary Celebration of

CALVIN MEMORIAL CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

(St. Catharines, ON)

Saturday, May 6, 2000

"Blessings Remembered"

1:30 OPEN HOUSE at CMCS (in the "new" gym)
3:30 Service of Celebration (Rev. John Suk, speaker)
5:00 Soup and Bun Supper

Please call CMCS at 905-937-6302 for more information about this special day!

ANNUAL BENEFIT CONCERT
for the Canadian Bible Society

Presented by the St. Thomas District Male Choir "Crescendo"
With special guest: John DeJager - Tenor
And featuring: Richard Dykstra - Organ. Director Jack Dykstra
In Knox Presbyterian Church - Hincks St., St. Thomas, Ont.
Sunday, May 7, 2000 - 7:30 p.m.
Freewill offering.

SOME FOLKS ARE LIKE EASTER EGGS

-

PRETTY OUTSIDE BUT HARD-BOILED INSIDE!

ONTARIO CHRISTIAN MALE CHORUS ASSOCIATION

IN CONCERT
featuring
Seven male choruses from Southwestern Ontario

SATURDAY, APRIL 29, 2000
7:30 p.m.

London Gospel Temple
288 Commissioners Rd W
London, Ontario

Tickets $10
Call John VanderGeest at 519-631-5258
or
George Bayne at 519-537-7070

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Study with Christian professors who are committed to your academic excellence.

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King's will offer a new 4-year Bachelor of Science degree in Computing Science.
4-year degrees in **Chemistry, Biology, Music** and **Commerce** are currently in the approval process.

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or (780)465-8331 • registrar@kingsu.ab.ca
Apply on the web: www.kingsu.ab.ca

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Christian University Education
9125 - 50 Street, Edmonton, AB T6B 2H3 • (780)465-3500 • Fax (780)465-3534

WITH THANKFULNESS TO GOD
WE INVITE YOU TO JOIN US
FOR THE
RETIREMENT CELEBRATION OF
PASTOR JACK & JENNIE QUARTEL
ON
SATURDAY, MAY 20, 2000 at the
CLINTON CHRISTIAN SCHOOL
243 Princess St. E., Clinton.

Dinner served at 5:30 p.m. Cost $15.00.
Program to follow at 7:30 p.m.
Please RSVP by April 28th to:
Harry Sjaarda
RR#6, Goderich, Ont. N7A 3Y3
Phone: 519-524-5534

Following 45 years of faithful service, they will officially retire on May 21st, 2000, at the 10:00 a.m. worship service at
Trinity Christian Reformed Church,
321 Suncoast Dr., Goderich.
You are invited to join us.
Call Harry for more information or for hotel accommodation.

News

Plan to extend benefits to gay couples meets opposition

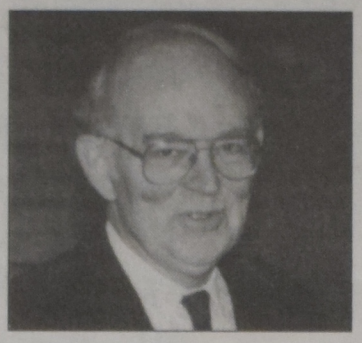
Alan Doerksen

OTTAWA — The government's controversial plan to offer benefits to gay couples, Bill C-23, is being criticized by Christian groups such as the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada (EFC) and the Christian Heritage Party (CHP). But Gerald Vandezande, former public affairs director of Citizens for Public Justice, supports the bill.

Bill C-23, known as the Modernization of Benefits and Obligations Act, will amend 68 federal statutes to extend benefits and obligations to same-sex couples "who have been cohabiting in a conjugal relationship for at least one year," according to a government press release.

Justice Minister Anne McLellan states, "These changes are about fairness. They will ensure that common-law relationships receive equal treatment under the law. This bill provides a responsible, balanced and legally sound framework within which to address recent court decisions, and to ensure that both benefits and obligations are applied to common-law relationships, same-sex and opposite-sex."

The impetus for the bill was a May 1999 Supreme Court ruling in which, says a government press release, "The Supreme Court of Canada made it clear that governments cannot limit benefits or obligations by discriminating against same-sex common-law relationships. Denying equal treatment before the law ... is contrary to the principles of equality enshrined in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms as well as the Canadian Human Rights Act."



CC FILES

Gerald Vandezande

In response to some groups' concern that the bill would threaten the traditional definition of marriage, McLellan added an amendment on March 22, which stated: "For greater certainty, the amendments made by this act do not affect the meaning of the word 'marriage', that is, the lawful union of one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others."

McLellan asserted, in a March 22 press release, "I have repeatedly said that this bill is about fairness. It is not about marriage and will not change the legal definition of marriage."

Finance Minister Paul Martin commented in February, "The fiscal impact of these amendments will be minimal if anything at all. This is not a cost issue."

Cost *is* an issue

But the Christian Heritage Party argues that cost *is* an issue for Bill C-23. In a recent e-mail communique, CHP's Annie Kok wrote: "The whole country was up in arms over the cost of a hockey 'subsidy,' but no one seems to care what Bill C-23 will cost us.... This bill will cost the taxpayers millions more than hockey tax relief would have.... This cost does not consist only of the pensions and other benefits involved. There will be millions spent on litigation costs when these so-called 'relationships' fall apart, (e.g. who gets benefits from whom)."

Calgary MP Eric Lowther, of the Canadian Alliance, agrees that litigation could become a problem. Recently in the House of Commons, Lowther stated, "The term 'conjugal' is not defined anywhere in the bill. This bill must define who qualifies and who does not. Otherwise, the government could be opening up a whole new front of litigation in the future.... If there is a dispute about whether there were 'conjugal relations' between [a] couple, how would the government prove that a sexual relationship existed? It is clearly inappropriate for the state to push private relationships into the courtroom to see if they qualify for benefits."

Marriage threatened

The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada (EFC) is "deeply concerned at the further extension of benefits to 'common-law partners' through this bill because it threatens to diminish the status of marriage," says Janet Epp Buckingham, EFC's General Legal Counsel. But she adds, "The proposed amendment grants a measure of protection to marriage and that is a significant step in the right direction." EFC's key concerns with the bill include:

- it reduces the cohabitation period from the current three years to one year. This is a significant decrease in the commitment required of couples.
- it extends rights, benefits and obligations on the basis of sexual intimacy. By extending privileges to marriage relationships, the state recognized the importance of marriage as a foundation for families. By expanding these rights, benefits and obligations to include common-law and homosexual couples, Canadian legislation would seem to be making these relationships the legal equivalent of marriage.
- the bill excludes household situations that are not based on sexual relationships. If the rights, benefits and obligations of marriage are to be extended to others, it should be on fair criteria such as economic dependency rather than that of sexual intimacy. For instance, EFC suggests in a press release, "Why not extend benefits on the basis of economic dependency so two sisters who share a home or two friends who have lived together for years can claim income tax breaks? That would not threaten the unique status of marriage and would be a far more fair criteria for extending benefits."

Bill is 'fair and just'

But Gerald Vandezande approves of Bill C-23, and comments, "With the addition of the proposed amendment, I think this bill is to be respected, and is fair and just. In terms of public policy pertaining to tax benefits, etc., people should be treated equally."

Vandezande believes the amendment to the bill is helpful. "It's a genuine reassurance on the part of the government" that the definition of marriage will be protected. The amendment will be "helpful when it comes to interpreting the law."

He points out that "CPJ argued all along for the heterosexual definition of marriage."

In 1996, CPJ announced its policy on registered domestic partnerships, which would recognize marriage as being strictly for heterosexual couples, but which would create a new category (registered domestic partnerships) for gay couples, or others, including straight couples, relatives, or even friends. Under CPJ's proposal, each of these relationships would be entitled to the same pension, health, tax and other benefits as married couples, provided they make a public declaration of mutual commitment.

Vandezande agrees that Bill C-23 focuses on sexual relationships, and says, "I'd prefer a more inclusive bill to affirm mutuality of non-conjugal relationships." The government has promised further consultation on non-conjugal relationships, he notes.

Vandezande criticizes EFC for its opposition to the bill. He says this is "a serious mistake to discriminate against common-law and gay and lesbian couples."

News Digest

Granny walks across U.S.

WASHINGTON, D.C. (Religion Today) — A 90 year-old great-grandmother recently walked across the United States on a religious mission. Doris Haddock, called Granny D by family and friends, ended her 5,760 km trek Feb. 29 at the Capitol steps in Washington, D.C., where she called on legislators to reform campaign finance laws, Ecumenical News International says.

"The Bible says we are all equals. It says we must take care of the widows and the orphans and those who don't have a voice," she said. "I believe most of us are losing our voices to the power of big money. It's a form of bribery, and bribes subvert the rights of many."

Granny D set out from the West Coast on Jan. 1, 1999, walking about 18 km a day, reports ENI. She hoped to encourage people to pressure their legislators to limit the amount and types of contributions candidates can receive.

She met and spoke with "many wonderful people of every race, every age, every income and political persuasion," she said, but churches were the least responsive to her message. She sent many letters to congregations along her route but heard from only one.

Willem the Spud

TORONTO – Why is a potato called a spud? According to the *Toronto Star*, Willem Van Spudde was a vegetable trader in Rotterdam in the 1840s, at the time of the Irish potato famine.

Seeing a potential market, he shipped potatoes to Dublin and Cork, Ireland. Van Spudde's name was stencilled on the sacks and his wares became known as "spuddes," later shortened to "spuds."

Watch out, P.E.I.

WASHINGTON (AP) – An iceberg twice the size of P.E.I. has broken off from Antarctica's Ross Ice Shelf, and could drift into shipping lanes around the South Polar Region.

The huge iceberg, detected by satellites, measures 295 km by 37 km, and is among the largest ever observed, according to the National Science Foundation (NSF), which co-ordinates American research at the South Pole. NSF reported that the iceberg formed from glacial ice moving off the Antarctic continent and into the sea.

Holland

MARTINAIR HOLLAND 2000 SPECIAL

AMSTERDAM

Dates		Adult	Senior	Child
Apr	17, 20	559	539	499
Apr	24, 27	579	559	499
May	1-15	599	579	499
May	18-29	629	599	529
Jun	1-15	669	629	549
Jun	19-22	699	659	559
Jun	26-29	739	689	599
Jul	3-13	759	699	599
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